

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

Monterey, California



A STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK
FOR PREDICTING AND EVALUATING
SOVIET INTERESTS IN ARMS CONTROL

VOLUME II:
THE STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TALKS, 1981-1983

by

KERRY M. KARTCHNER
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CHAPTER ONE

U.S. AND SOVIET START PROPOSALS, 1982-1983

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of U.S. and Soviet START proposals from 1982 to 1983. It is important that this history be reviewed prior to examining sources of Soviet disinterest in strategic arms reductions for several reasons. First, Soviet START proposals reveal Soviet negotiating priorities. Second, Soviet reactions to U.S. START proposals shed valuable light on Soviet strategic threat perceptions and objectives. Third, changes and modifications in Soviet START proposals can be tracked over time. Comparing these changes with changes in U.S. START policy may suggest which side made the most movement from its original position and hence was prepared to be the most flexible. This should give one indication of relative U.S. and Soviet interests in a strategic arms reduction agreement for the period under consideration. Fourth, reviewing the

overall negotiating record will provide the basis and context for examining leadership, threat perception, foreign policy, military, and domestic sources of Soviet disinterest in agreeing to reduce strategic arms to be discussed in the chapters that follow. Furthermore, this history will show that considerable domestic pressure on the U.S. side undermined whatever incentives the Soviets may have had to make compromises in the negotiations to achieve a START agreement. This theme is taken up in greater detail in Chapter Five on bargaining leverage. Finally, it should be noted that no thorough and publicly available history of U.S. and Soviet START proposals exists, although there is a lengthy journalistic account of the domestic U.S. inter-agency bargaining process that treats the evolution of the U.S. START position.¹ Brief descriptions of basic U.S. and Soviet START positions exist but do not track their evolution and development.²

¹ Strobe Talbott, Deadly Gambits: The Reagan administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control, updated version, (New York: Vintage Books, 1985). While this book has been the source for some material used in this chapter, its focus is heavily on the U.S. side of the START (and INF) negotiations. Soviet proposals and policy are treated by Talbott only incidentally, and then superficially.

² In particular, see National Academy of Sciences, Committee on International Security and Arms Control, Nuclear Arms Control: Background and Issues, (Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1985), pp. 58-80; Coit D. Blacker and Gloria Duffy, eds., International Arms Control: Issues and Agreements, 2nd ed., (Stanford: Stanford

A certain school of thought in the United States has held that the principal source of Soviet disinterest in consummating a strategic arms reduction agreement between 1981 and 1983 was the non-negotiability of the U.S. START approach. The following history of U.S. and Soviet START proposals invalidates this thesis. A comparison of U.S. and Soviet START positions supports the notion that the main reasons for the failure to achieve a strategic arms reduction agreement during this period have to do with the Soviet Union, not the United States' negotiating posture. That posture was in flux for much of the time the talks were in session and the Soviet Union never gave the U.S. START position a chance to settle. There was considerable movement in the U.S. START position during the 18 month course of the negotiations, and while much of it was obviously motivated by strictly domestic political considerations, there were non-trivial concessions to

University Press, 1984), pp. 272-276; Congressional Budget Office, An Analysis of Administration Strategic Arms Reduction and Modernization Proposals, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Budget Office, March 1984); Charles R. Gellner, U.S. and Soviet Proposals in Negotiations to Reduce Strategic Armaments (START) -- Brief Outlines, (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1 Jan. 1984); Robert Kennedy, "START: Problems and Prospects," in Robert Kennedy and John M. Weinstein, eds., The Defense of the West: Strategic and European Security Issues Reappraised, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 185-222; U.S. Department of State, "Evolution of the U.S. START Approach," Current Policy, No. 436, 1983; and Michael Krepon, "Assessing Strategic Arms Reduction Proposals," World Politics, 35 (Jan. 1983): 216-44.

expressed Soviet concerns (on the size of cuts in launchers, for example).³

Furthermore, the Soviet Union placed a subordinate priority on START, as will be shown here and in later chapters, and held movement in its START policy hostage to demanded Western concessions in the INF negotiations. In this sense, one might ascribe the failure to achieve a START agreement to the West's refusal to grant nuclear hegemony in Europe to the Soviet Union.

I. EARLY POSTURING

The Soviets had expressed desires to commence discussions on strategic arms limitations and reductions as soon as President Reagan assumed office in 1981.⁴ The United States determined the moment for accepting this invitation. Although candidate Reagan had promised to

³ Leslie Gelb of the New York Times noted late in the START negotiations that both Rowny and ACDA chief Kenneth Adelman felt that the U.S. had lost negotiating credibility due to the many proposal changes made under domestic pressure. See "Arms Talks: Shift by U.S.," New York Times, 5 October 1983.

⁴ See the Pravda claim that Moscow had proposed talks on "limiting and reducing strategic arms" in January 1981, in Soviet Broadcast in English to North America, 3 July 1982 (citing a Pravda article of the same date), in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 6 July 1982, p. AA2. Also see Alexander M. Haig, Jr., Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy, (New York: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 102-109, 228; and Raymond L. Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1985), p. 1022.

"immediately open negotiations on a SALT II treaty,"⁵ the administration was deliberately reluctant to begin negotiations right away. As Alexander Haig put it in his memoirs, "The time was not right to give the Soviets something they wanted as passionately as they wanted a treaty on strategic arms. Their international behavior did not warrant it."⁶

President Reagan chose the occasion of a commencement address on 9 May 1982 at his alma mater to publicly set forth the U.S. Administration's proposal for strategic arms reductions. Quoting the President's address:

For the immediate future, I'm asking my START -- and START really means, we've given up on SALT, START means Strategic Arms Reduction Talks -- negotiating team to propose to their Soviet counterparts a practical, phased reduction plan. The focus of our efforts will be to reduce significantly the most destabilizing systems -- the ballistic missiles, the number of warheads they carry, and their overall destructive potential.

At the first phase, or the end of the first phase of START, I expect ballistic missile warheads, the most serious threat we face, to be reduced to equal levels, equal ceilings, at least a third below the current levels. To enhance stability, I would ask that no more than half of those warheads be land-based. I hope that these warhead reductions in missiles themselves could be achieved as rapidly as possible.

⁵ Haig, Caveat, p. 46.

⁶ Ibid., p. 46. Later in the same volume Haig notes: "at this early stage there was nothing substantive to talk about, nothing to negotiate, until the U.S.S.R. began to demonstrate its willingness to behave like a responsible power. That was the basis of our early policy toward Moscow." Ibid., p. 105.

In a second phase, we'll seek to achieve an equal ceiling on other elements of our strategic nuclear forces including limits on the ballistic missile throw-weight at less than current American levels. In both phases, we shall insist on verification procedures to insure compliance with the agreement.⁷

Specific elements of the Administration's proposal were leaked to the press several weeks before the negotiations opened. One such account gave the following details, according to "a key Administration official":⁸

In Phase One;

Each side would be limited to 5,000 missile warheads on no more than 850 intercontinental land-based and sea-based missiles.

Within the limit of 5,000 missile warheads, neither side could have more than 2,500 warheads on land-based missiles.

Reductions would take place over 5 to 10 years.

In Phase Two;

At some indefinite future time Washington would try to equalize missile 'throw-weight,' or the weight a missile can carry onto target, and to deal with long-range bombers, of which the United

⁷ President Reagan, "Arms Control and the Future of East-West Relations," Eureka College Commencement, Peoria, 9 May 1982, reprinted in U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Realism, Strength, Negotiation: Key Foreign Policy Statements of the Reagan administration, Washington, D.C., May 1984, pp. 27-30.

⁸ Leslie H. Gelb, "Arms Accord: Stony Path," New York Times, 11 May 1982; See also, Leslie H. Gelb, "U.S. to Propose Sublimit on Missile Warheads," New York Times, 9 May 1982.

States has about 400 and the Soviet union somewhat fewer.

The Administration made clear that the 850 "deployed ballistic missile" limit was based on the principle of achieving at least a 30 percent cut in the numbers of land-based missiles.⁹

President Reagan's speech was delivered on a Sunday. The Soviets apparently were briefed on the new proposals the day before and their public reactions were immediate.¹⁰ There are three interesting aspects of the Soviet reactions to President Reagan's START proposal. They were:

- (1) criticism of the substance of the proposals;
- (2) indications of interest in retaining "some fundamental things" from the SALT II Treaty; and,
- (3) use of criticisms and arguments put forth by American opponents of the Administration.

Soviet reactions came in two stages. First Brezhnev established the themes and rationale to be employed in criticizing the President's proposals. These themes were then repeated and elaborated by the Soviet media. Brezhnev made his substantive reply to Reagan's START proposals in a speech at the All-Union Komsomol Congress on 18 May 1982.¹¹

⁹ Gelb, "Arms Accord: Stony Path,"

¹⁰ Dusko Doder, "Soviets Hit U.S. Plan On Arms," Washington Post, 11 May 1982.

¹¹ "Brezhnev: USSR Is Ready for Arms Talks," Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 34, 20 (16 June 1982): 1-3, 23.

He began the section of his speech concerning arms control by arousing anti-American sentiment:

What awaits the peoples -- peaceful construction and difficult but noble work to ensure happier and more suitable living conditions, or the madness and nightmare of nuclear destruction?

The answer to [this question] depends on how active and consistent the peace-loving countries' policy is and how resolutely and concertedly the masses, many millions strong, come out against the course followed by the instigators of a new world war and in defense of peace on earth.¹²

The use of the phrase "the course followed by the instigators of a new world war" is a veiled Soviet reference to U.S. policy. It indicates the innate hostility of the Soviet leadership toward the United States at that time. This was probably also symptomatic of Soviet recognition that détente had by then outlived its (unilateral) usefulness. The "masses" Brezhnev referred to are primarily the populations of western Europe.

It should be noted that Brezhnev used the term "limitation and reduction of strategic arms" in his speech to indicate Soviet interests in perpetuating the SALT process with its emphasis on limitations (the preferred Soviet emphasis) as opposed to reductions (the preferred American emphasis). While START was referred to as the "talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms,"

¹² Ibid., p. 2.

the INF negotiations were not referred to as talks on reductions, but rather only as talks on limitations -- implying that: (1) the Soviet Union placed emphasis in START on preserving the SALT II framework of limitations with modest reductions; and, (2) that the Soviets would prefer perpetuating through limits the then-existing status quo in Europe, rather than changing it through reductions. This would be standard Soviet usage throughout the negotiations.

The Soviet Union wanted to portray itself as setting no preconditions for negotiations on strategic arms reductions. In his 18 May 1982 speech to the All-Union Komsomol Congress, Brezhnev professed Soviet interest in reaching "an honest and fair accord that doesn't infringe anyone's interests," and indicated that the Soviet Union was ready to begin talks "with the aim of working out such an accord without delay and with no strings attached." The Soviet Union is on record as having resisted numerous past attempts at strategic arms reductions in other negotiating forums, notably SALT II, yet on this occasion Brezhnev added: "we have always been in favor of substantial reductions in strategic arms -- there's no need to persuade us on this score."¹³

Brezhnev then proceeded to make criticisms of Reagan's Eureka START proposals that deliberately distorted

¹³ Ibid., p. 20.

the terms of the American position, played up internal U.S. opposition to the Reagan administration's arms control policies, and set the theme for Soviet commentaries to follow throughout the course of the START negotiations. There was even a hint of accusing the United States of deception. To quote Brezhnev:

- "1) the American position is absolutely one-sided, primarily because the US would like, in general, to exclude from the talks those types of strategic arms that it is most intensively developing at present.
- "2) knowledgeable people in the United States itself stated at once that this is an unrealistic position, one that is divorced from life, and perhaps is simply insincere.
- "3) It directly prejudices the USSR's security, and at the same time leaves Washington a free hand in the implementation of American programs for building up strategic arms.¹⁴

¹⁴ Ibid.

Brezhnev added:

It's hard not to draw the conclusion that the position announced by the US President is aimed not at searching for an agreement but at ensuring conditions for the continuation of Washington's attempts to achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union.¹⁵

He then set forth Soviet conditions for "successfully" concluding a strategic arms limitation and reduction agreement, enumerated as follows:

- (1) "talks should "actually pursue the goal of limiting and reducing strategic arms, not serve as a cover for a continued arms race and the breakdown of the existing parity.
- (2) "it's necessary that both sides conduct the talks with consideration for each other's legitimate security interests and in strict accordance with the principle of equality and equal security.
- (3) "we must preserve everything positive that was achieved earlier. After all, the talks aren't starting from scratch; a great deal of by no means superfluous work has already been done. This should not be forgotten.
- (4) "It's also extremely important to effectively close all channels for the continuation of the strategic arms race in any form. This means that the creation of new types of strategic weapons should be either banned or restricted to the utmost by agreed-upon parameters."¹⁶

Brezhnev continued by making proposals that gave clear indications of Soviet interest in codifying the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

existing strategic "equilibrium" via a nuclear weapons "freeze" rather than reductions in strategic arms:

We would be prepared to reach an agreement to freeze the strategic weapons of the USSR and the US right now, as soon as the talks begin, to freeze them quantitatively, and to place maximum restrictions on their modernization.

It's also as necessary that neither the US nor the Soviet Union take actions that would upset the stability of the strategic situation. Such a freeze, important in itself would also facilitate progress toward the radical limitation and reduction of strategic arms. This, in brief, is our position on the question of strategic weapons.¹⁷

The Brezhnev speech, as reported in TASS, was well covered by Western news media.¹⁸ A Pravda editorial published by TASS on 3 June 1982 picked up on and refined the party line set forth in Brezhnev's speech. The following statement is extracted from that editorial:

Outwardly it might seem [that Reagan's START proposals] sound attractive -- the reductions are substantial and cover really formidable systems, but if one looks just a bit deeper, one will discover a striking lopsidedness in the U.S. position.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 20, 23.

¹⁸ A representative example of Western media coverage can be found in Dusko Doder, "Soviets Call U.S. Plan 'Unfair, Unrealistic,'" Washington Post, 19 May 1982. An analysis of Brezhnev's speech can be found in Sallie Wise, "Brezhnev Announces Soviet Position on Strategic Arms Reduction Talks," Radio Liberty Research, RL 206/82, 18 May 1982.

Consequently, the so-called radical reductions favored by the U.S. President would be such only for the Soviet side. They in Washington would like to reduce by more than half the Soviet ICBMs while foregoing practically nothing themselves.

Should the U.S. administration's plan be realized, the Soviet strategic nuclear potential (by the number of warheads) would be three times smaller than that of the United States.¹⁹

The Pravda editorial noted that 70 percent of the USSR's nuclear warheads were on land-based ICBMs while only 28 percent of America's warheads were on ICBMs.²⁰ It also repeated the charge that the Soviet Union would never allow the United States to achieve nuclear superiority over the USSR.²¹

This charge carries an interesting connotation in this particular context. It indicates that one major Soviet concern in START was that the United States not be allowed to use arms control to gain nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. That the Soviets would consider arms control a potential avenue of approach for gaining military superiority, even by their adversaries, is telling. It

¹⁹ Pravda editorial quoted in Washington Times, 4 June 1982, p. 1. See also John Burns, "Moscow Rebuts American Plan for Arms Cuts," New York Times, 4 June 1982, p. 1; Associated Press in Boston Globe, 4 June 1982; The Arms Control Reporter, June 1982, pp. 611.B.30 - 611.B.31; and, Soviet Aerospace, Vol. 35, No. 6 (7 June 1982): 41-42.

²⁰ These figures were generally consistent with information publicly available in the West at the time.

²¹ Washington Times, 4 June 1982, p. 1.

suggests that the Soviets have at least considered the idea that arms control could be applied to such purposes as achieving unilateral advantages. By way of contrast, the United States has not suffered from an official preoccupation the concern that the Soviet Union may be seeking strategic superiority through asymmetrical arms limitations.

Perhaps more importantly, this Soviet criticism demonstrates conclusively that the Soviets perceived U.S. START proposals as having the effect of shifting the direction of strategic developments away from the advantages they had gained during the course of the SALT decade and toward restoration of a credible U.S. deterrent posture, precisely the Reagan administration's stated goal. In fact, it could be said that for the first time since SALT I, U.S. arms control policy was consistent with overall U.S. strategic deterrence policy.

The Soviet warning that it would never allow the United States to achieve nuclear superiority has two other interesting implications. First, the Soviets recognized the political advantages nuclear superiority may confer on a nation willing to exploit those advantages. If superiority were meaningless, why would they care so much about preventing the U.S. from achieving it? Second, by repeating this theme in the context of the START negotiations (as well as in the INF negotiations), the Soviet Union demonstrated

that it believed the combined effect of SALT I and II had been to deny the U.S. meaningful strategic advantages, and it aimed to perpetuate that condition.

The Pravda editorial also urged that strategic nuclear weapons be frozen quantitatively as a preliminary step to the Geneva talks, and that maximum limits on modernization of new systems be incorporated into any accord that should be produced.²² It further represented the official Soviet position by stressing that the negotiations should be aimed toward "a renunciation of efforts to gain military superiority," and that "strict observance of the principle of equality and equal security" be the basis for agreement:

The task of the talks, in the opinion of the Soviet Union, should be to find, in spite of different structures of strategic arms on both sides, mutually acceptable long-term solutions with due account for political, geographic and other factors that would greatly reduce the level of military confrontation between the U.S.S.R. and the United States without damaging their security.²³

Soviet commentaries clearly aimed to make the United States position appear hypocritical. In this regard, they bitterly criticized the U.S. administration's avowed policy of building up American nuclear strength as a prelude to

²² Ibid., p. 1.

²³ Burns, "Moscow Rebuts American Plan for Arms Cuts," cited in footnote 17.

negotiating strategic arms agreements.²⁴ The Pravda editorial quoted above stated:

To propose that the Soviet Union remove the shield that protects it and its friends from imperialist nuclear threats, and to implement at the same time a rearmament program, the most comprehensive in United States history, is too much even for bourgeois public opinion, which is used to political sensation.²⁵

The principal Soviet criticism regarding the substance of President Reagan's Eureka College proposals was that they were, in Brezhnev's phrase, "absolutely unilateral in nature."²⁶ Other Soviet officials were quoted as calling the proposals "unfair and unrealistic."²⁷ Soviet criticisms of the U.S. START proposals involved the following points:

²⁴ It is important to note that the Soviets may derive considerable satisfaction from at least two points regarding Reagan's "build-up." First, the U.S. entered the START negotiations long before there were any prospects of Reagan's military program actually materializing. Since the Administration had first portrayed such a restoration of American nuclear strength as a prerequisite to negotiations, the Soviets could view the U.S. presence at the negotiating table prior to this as a concession. Second, from the perspective of 1986, the Soviets might also take satisfaction in realizing that Reagan's strategic modernization program never did materialize in the quantity he originally called for. This issue will be taken up in the chapter on bargaining leverage factors influencing Soviet interests in strategic arms reductions.

²⁵ Burns, "Moscow Rebuts American Plan for Arms Cuts.

²⁶ See "Brezhnev's Nuclear Response," Baltimore Sun, 19 May 1982.

²⁷ Dusko Doder, "Soviets Call U.S. Plan 'Unfair, Unrealistic,'" Washington Post, 18 May 1982.

- (1) they would require greater reductions in Soviet land-based missiles than in American land-based missiles;
- (2) they would involve 'troublesome' verification problems;
- (3) the U.S. was using START to compensate for faulty American force decisions of the 1960s;
- (4) implementation of the U.S. START proposals would upset the then-existing strategic balance;
- (5) U.S. START proposals excluded limits on strategic nuclear systems the U.S. was then developing; and,
- (6) Reagan's START proposals were largely propaganda, motivated by the need to mollify the antinuclear peace movement both in Europe and the U.S.

On the first point, the U.S. had been trying since SALT I to "move the Russians out to sea."²⁸ This meant urging the Soviets to shift a larger proportion of their warheads to submarine-launched ballistic missiles on the grounds that a sea-based force was more survivable, and hence more stabilizing.

The second point regarding "troublesome" verification problems is curious, since it was most often the Americans who complained about verifiability. It can only be concluded that the Soviets were picking up this objection to Reagan's START proposals from U.S. critics who had asserted that verification difficulties would impede effectiveness of

²⁸ The phrase quoted is from Strobe Talbott, Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II, (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), pp. 163, 207-208. See also John Newhouse, Cold Dawn: The Story of SALT, (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), pp. 177-78.

the kinds of reductions Reagan had envisioned. The third point, that the U.S. was using START to compensate for faulty nuclear force decisions of the 1960s, warrants clarification. According to Soviet arguments cited in the U.S. press, Americans were "trying to change the rules of the game to correct a decision made two decades ago: to opt for the smaller but accurate Minuteman apparently on the assumption that the Soviets would not be capable of improving their huge SS-11 rocket."²⁹

The fourth point, that U.S. nuclear weapon modernization plans would upset the existing strategic balance, was to be a consistent theme throughout START. It is especially interesting because this was also a key Soviet criticism of NATO's Intermediate-range Nuclear Force modernization efforts in the INF negotiations, and it would later form the basis of much Soviet criticism of the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). This theme in Soviet commentaries on INF, START, and SDI suggests two points. One, the Soviets were satisfied with the status of the strategic "equilibrium" (to use the common Soviet term for "balance") as it was perceived by them prior to the beginning of NATO INF deployments in the Fall of 1983. Two,

²⁹ Doder, "Soviets Call U.S. Plan 'Unfair, Unrealistic'.

the Soviets perceived NATO's INF deployments as upsetting that "equilibrium."³⁰

The balance of strategic nuclear power in place at the beginning of START was, in part, the product of the SALT process. This may partially explain Soviet interests in retaining basic elements of the SALT framework, with its emphasis on launchers as the principal unit of limitation, its ceilings on MIRVed systems, and its allowance for Soviet "heavy" ICBMs.

In connection with the criticism that implementing U.S. START proposals would upset the existing strategic balance, the Soviets also charged that these proposals did not meet the requirement of "equality and equal security."³¹ One Soviet commentator expanded on this theme:

So far, neither the president nor his close advisers have been able to come up with valid arguments and facts confirming that parity in strategic forces does not exist and that the balance is in favor of the Soviet Union.

Of course, if one weapons system of the strategic triad is singled out, one can find disparity. But there is ample and effective compensation for such disparity in the triad's other components.³²

³⁰ Soviet perceptions of NATO INF deployments will be treated more fully in Chapter Four.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Vladimir Alexeev of the Novosti Press Agency Moscow in a letter to New York Times, 24 May 1982.

The fifth element of Soviet criticisms of the substance of Reagan's Eureka START proposals was that they intentionally excluded "those types of strategic weapons that [the U.S.] at present is developing most intensively." Brezhnev was specifically referring to submarine-launched ballistic missiles and strategic bombers.³³ Attention might be called to two implications of this particular criticism. First, it is profoundly typical of Soviet negotiating practice to exclude or minimize limitations on systems they are currently developing, especially when those systems are designed to play key roles in the accomplishment of Soviet war-fighting objectives. Second, the Soviets may in fact be revealing genuine concern with certain U.S. systems they consider particularly "de-stabilizing" from their point of view.³⁴

On the sixth aspect of Soviet criticisms, Novosti commentator Gennady Gerasimov referred to the alleged propaganda intent of Reagan's Eureka START proposals when he said: "What also makes one wary is the opinion voiced by political analysts to the effect that underlying the president's need for an impressive speech were tactical motives of current policy rather than principles of peace

³³ See Wise, "Brezhnev Announces Soviet Position," p. 2.

³⁴ This falls under the category of 'threat perceptions' and will also be treated at greater length in a later chapter.

considerations." He also noted that President Reagan planned a visit to Europe soon after his Eureka speech, implying that Europeans may have been as much the intended audience for Reagan's proposals as the Soviets.³⁵

In criticizing Reagan's proposals, Soviet leader Brezhnev also made several points that gave clear indications of Soviet priorities and objectives in START. These points represented three elements "needed for the talks to proceed successfully and bring about an agreement." They are given in press reports as follows:

- 1) "The talks should 'actually pursue' the goal of reducing arms rather than serving as a 'cover' for the continuing arms race 'and the breakdown of the existing parity'.
- 2) "Both sides should show 'due regard' for each other's 'legitimate security interests' on the 'principle of equality and equal security'.
- 3) "The framework should 'preserve everything positive that has been achieved earlier'. . . . A great and by no means superfluous work has already been accomplished [and] this should not be forgotten."³⁶

³⁵ Doder, "Soviets Hit U.S. Plan." This same article contains the following interesting comment: "Soviet sources said privately that the plan may have a 'psychological effect' in the struggle for popular opinion. It makes it almost impossible for Moscow to reject it outright." Note that, once again, a Soviet criticism reveals Soviet intentions as much as it indicts American policies. The principal audience for much of Soviet arms control policy in this period was the West European public.

³⁶ Doder, "Soviets Call U.S. Plan 'Unfair, Unrealistic,'" and Wise, "Brezhnev Announces Soviet Position."

It should have been clear at the very outset of these negotiations that the Soviets were operating on the basis of entirely different strategic rationales than those underlying U.S. objectives. This meant that the Soviets evaluated the ostensibly 'stabilizing' or 'destabilizing' effects of given nuclear weapon systems differently than did the U.S. The Soviets even rejected the long-standing U.S. contention that sea-based missiles were inherently stabilizing.

In these early public revelations of proposals and criticisms, an important objective of Soviet START policy began to emerge -- to inhibit U.S. efforts to embark on a strategic modernization program that would undo the Soviet gains in SALT. By portraying the U.S. modernization program as hypocritical and diametrically opposed to the spirit and objectives of further efforts to limit and constrain the superpower 'arms race' the Soviet Union sought to develop one dimension of an overall foreign policy offensive against the Reagan administration.

This points up a critical asymmetry in U.S.-Soviet arms negotiations. Because of the highly public nature of U.S. political and military decisionmaking, U.S. weapon programs and policies can be made the subject of arms negotiations long before they are actually fielded, while Soviet systems -- deployed in public silence -- may not become the subject of negotiations until long after they are

operational. Note that the Soviet SS-20 Intermediate-range Ballistic Missile [IRBM] was first fielded in 1976, but not made the subject of U.S.-Soviet arms negotiations until the INF talks commenced in the Fall of 1981, five years later. On the other hand, NATO systems developed as a response to the SS-20 (Pershing IIs and Ground-launched Cruise Missiles [GLCMs]) were subjected to negotiations fully two years prior to their deployment.

II. THE INITIAL U.S. AND SOVIET START POSITIONS

Despite Soviet criticisms of Reagan's Eureka speech with its call for two-phased reductions, a statement issued simultaneously in Washington and Moscow only weeks later on 31 May 1982 announced that START negotiations would commence on 29 June 1982. It read:

The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have agreed to begin formal negotiations on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms on June 29, 1982, in Geneva, Switzerland. The US delegation will be led by Ambassador Edward Rowny and the Soviet delegation will be led by Ambassador V.P. Karpov. Both sides attach great importance to these negotiations.³⁷

³⁷ "Joint Announcement by the United States and the Soviet Union: Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, May 31, 1982," in U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1982, (Washington, D.C.: 1985), p. 332.

Note that, in accordance with the Soviet formulation, the subject of the negotiations was to be on limitations as well as reductions according to this mutual statement.

In a Memorial Day speech at Arlington National Cemetery on the same day, President Reagan gave a name to the new negotiations, announced their objectives, and committed the United States to abide by existing arms control agreements:

In the quest for peace, the United States has proposed to the Soviet Union that we reduce the threat of nuclear weapons by negotiating a stable balance at far lower levels of strategic forces. This is a fitting occasion to announce that START, as we call it, strategic arms reductions, that the negotiations between our country and the Soviet Union will begin the 29th of June.

As for existing strategic arms agreements, we will refrain from actions which undercut them so long as the Soviet Union shows equal restraint. With good will and dedication on both sides, I pray that we will achieve a safer world.³⁸

On Tuesday, 29 June 1982, formal negotiations on strategic arms reduction began in Geneva, Switzerland. The U.S. delegation was led by Edward L. Rowny, a retired lieutenant general who for six years had been a member of the Carter SALT II team but had resigned from the delegation saying the treaty it had negotiated was unverifiable and

³⁸ "Remark by President Reagan: Strategic Arms Reduction [Extract], 31 May 1982," in Ibid.

unequal.³⁹ The Soviet delegation was headed by Viktor P. Karpov, a veteran of both the SALT I and SALT II negotiations who had assumed the position of chief Soviet negotiator late in the SALT II talks.⁴⁰

Rowny indicated at a press conference following the first session that he had read a letter from Reagan to Karpov blaming the Soviet strategic weapons buildup for the present instability, but declaring the talks were an historic opportunity. The delegations met again the next day (Wednesday) for the first working session of the talks, and which then began meeting every Tuesday and Thursday.⁴¹ A chronology of START negotiating rounds is given in Table 1.1 below.

An important element of early Soviet START positions was given by East European sources. They indicated that if ICBMs were to be cut in the first phase the Soviet Union would insist on guarantees to cut bombers in the second phase of the talks.⁴²

³⁹ See "Dogged Determination Marks Rowny's Style," Washington Times, 29 June 1982.

⁴⁰ See "Top Soviet Negotiator Veteran of Arms Talks," Washington Times, 29 June 1982.

⁴¹ "U.S. Gives Details of Arms Plan to Soviet," New York Times, 1 July 1982.

⁴² Ibid.

Table 1.1

CHRONOLOGY OF START ROUNDS

Round One:	29 June 1982 - 12 Aug. 1982
Round Two:	7 Oct. 1982 - 2 Dec. 1982
Round Three:	2 Feb. 1983 - 31 Mar. 1983
Round Four:	8 June 1983 - 2 Aug. 1983
Round Five:	5 Oct. 1983 - 7 Dec. 1983

The U.S. position was set out during the first several working sessions of the talks. As in SALT II, the U.S. proposed a series of ceilings and sub-ceilings to be equally applied to U.S. and Soviet forces as follows:⁴³

⁴³ See, inter alia, Charles R. Gellner, U.S. and Soviet Proposals in Negotiations to Reduce Strategic Armaments (START) -- Brief Outlines, Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1 Jan. 1984; "U.S. Explains Nuclear Arms Reduction Proposal to Soviets," Los Angeles Times, 1 July 1982; and "U.S. Gives Details of Arms Plan to Soviet," New York Times, 1 July 1982. For the cruise missile and bomber limits, see Leslie H. Gelb, "U.S. and Soviet Views Far Apart At Opening of Arms Talks Today," New York Times, 29 June 1982.

A. Warheads

- a total of 5000 ballistic missile warheads
- no more than 2500 on ICBMs
- remaining warheads would be for SLBMs

B. "Deployed" Missiles

- a total of 850 ICBMs and SLBMs would be allowed
- of the 850, up to 210 could be "heavy" or "medium"
- of the 210 "heavy" and "medium" missiles, up to 110 could be "heavy" ICBMs

C. Other Provisions

- long-range bombers would be limited to 400 for the U.S. and 350 for the Soviet Union, reductions would be agreed upon in the second phase
- cruise missile limits could be discussed in phase one, but would not be limited until phase two

It was proposed that in Phase II throw-weight reductions be made to 1.8 mkg each side, or about the then-current US level. At the time, the Soviet Union had about 5.6 million kilograms. It was further proposed that the SALT II limits on ALCMs be continued (20 ALCMs per bomber),

and that limits on other systems, such as bombers (to include Backfire), be established.⁴⁴

In April 1983, nearly ten months after the first round of the START talks began, it was revealed that a 210 sublimit on "heavy" and "medium" missiles had been part of the U.S. START proposal early on, and would apply to the Soviet SS-17, SS-18, and SS-19 multiple-warhead land-based missiles, and that of the 210 missiles, a maximum of 110 could be SS-18s. All of these missiles are much larger than the U.S. Minuteman missile and are somewhat more comparable in size to the American MX missile. The idea was to allow the United States to deploy a similar number (i.e. 210) of comparable missiles.⁴⁵ Apparently, the remaining 640 missiles allowed under the overall ceiling of 850 would be composed of Minuteman (or SICBM) missiles for the United States, and a comparable force of "light" ICBMs for the Soviet Union.

The 1983-84 edition of The Military Balance gave Soviet missile strengths as follows:⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Gellner, "U.S. and Soviet Proposals."

⁴⁵ Michael Getler, "U.S. Arms Reduction Plan Contains More Missile Cuts Than Announced," Washington Post, 13 April 1983; and, "U.S. Reportedly Proposes Much Bigger Reduction in ICBMs," Los Angeles Times, 14 April 1983. The 210 "heavy" and "medium" and 110 "heavy" ICBM sublimits had apparently not been made public prior to April 1983.

⁴⁶ The International Institute for Strategic Studies, The Military Balance 1983-1984, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1983), p. 119.

150 SS-17 (Mod 3 = 4 warheads)

308 SS-18 (Mod 4 = 10 warheads)

330 SS-19 (Mod 3 = 6 warheads)

This added up to a total of 788 in this category of weapon. U.S. START proposals would have required an approximately two thirds cut in the numbers of these missiles, and a 70 percent cut in the number of Soviet MIRVed missiles overall.⁴⁷

In May 1982, the U.S. had indicated that it wanted to leave the number of weapons on bombers unlimited, but would be willing to have equal numbers of bombers. Backfire was to be included in any case. The U.S. response to the Soviet argument that U.S. bombers carry more payload was that the Soviets have a much better air defense system.⁴⁸ This linking of offensive and defensive systems was one feature that distinguished START from SALT I and II.

On the eve of the negotiations, Washington cabled a detailed set of instructions to Ambassador Rowny with last minute modifications and clarifications in the U.S. position. Apparently, these instructions included "the original Presidential negotiation position, the amendments

⁴⁷ Getler, "U.S. Arms Reduction Plan Contains More Missile Cuts Than Announced."

⁴⁸ Charles Corddry in Baltimore Sun, 21 May 1982, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, June 1982, p. 611.B.27.

made to it in another decision memorandum . . . and interpretations of these decisions by experts in the departments and agencies."⁴⁹

According to these new instructions, proportional reductions were to be made in SS-18s (Reagan had termed SALT II 'fatally flawed' precisely because of its failure to reduce Soviet SS-18s), although the President reportedly refused a Pentagon request to make elimination of all SS-18s part of the U.S. negotiating position. Elements of Phases One and Two were to be established in a single negotiation, and a final decision on verification and the counting of missile reloads was put off until the fall. It was also reported that Reagan would be willing to discuss limits (but not total bans) on MX and Trident II in exchange for Soviet agreement to reductions. The U.S. would submit a draft treaty later in the negotiations, and would meanwhile resort to a typical Soviet tactic and discuss only general principles.⁵⁰

One week into the negotiations, Michael Getler reported in the Washington Post that:

American officials suggest privately that there is a little give in the American proposals, but they are talking about allowing a few extra missile warheads or being a little bit flexible on how bombers and cruise missiles figure in the talks.

⁴⁹ Gelb, "U.S. and Soviet Views Far Apart."

⁵⁰ Ibid.

There is no hint of a major fall-back position even having been developed.⁵¹

Upon arriving in Geneva for the beginning of the START negotiations, Soviet ambassador Karpov issued a statement reflecting the principal facets of the Soviet position on arms control, of which START was but one. It is clear from the statement, given below, that the Soviet Union hoped START would be in the image of a SALT-type agreement, perhaps a SALT III:

The USSR delegation has arrived in Geneva in order to hold talks with the U.S. delegation on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms and to continue that process which is vitally important to the cause of peace which was begun with the SALT-I and SALT-II agreements. The USSR is striving to do everything it should in order to rid people of the nuclear threat, to ensure a peaceful future for all people on earth. Indeed, the pledge adopted by the Soviet Union not to be first to use nuclear weapons which was announced in Leonid Ilich Brezhnev's message to the second special session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament is of historic significance.

If the other nuclear powers were to follow the Soviet Union's example, then the likelihood of the occurrence of nuclear war will be virtually reduced to nothing.

This action by the Soviet state should be a great and positive incentive also at the talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms.⁵²

⁵¹ Michael Getler, "Lesson From the Moneyed: Shoot for Prudent Risks in Arms Talks," Washington Post, 11 July 1982.

⁵² Moscow Domestic Service, "Karpov Statement on START at Geneva Airport," in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 28 June 1982, p. AA1.

Karpov then presented several Soviet objectives in the form of general principles and asserted the need for both Moscow and Washington to go beyond words:

The USSR delegation is entrusted with the mission of trying to achieve at the talks the elaboration of such a decision as would serve the strengthening of international stability and the interests of peace. The Soviet Union favors a Soviet-American agreement which would provide for a significant quantitative reduction of strategic arms and which would, at the same time, establish effective limitations upon their qualitative improvement. Of course, the efforts of both sides are required for the success of the talks. It is therefore extremely important to give them a correct tone at the outset. It is insufficient merely to proclaim a readiness for talks. The main thing is to conduct the matter in practice to the attainment of the most significant mutually acceptable agreements.

The USSR delegation is ready for constructive and purposeful work. And we are sure that, if a true aspiration is shown also on the American side for the elaboration of an agreement which would be to the full extent based on the principle of equality and equal security and take into account the legitimate interests of both sides, then talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic weapons justify the hopes connected with them by the world public.⁵³

Detailed elements of the Soviet counterproposal were publicly revealed during the weeks following the opening of the first round. They included the following:⁵⁴

⁵³ Ibid. Karpov was, of course, alluding to the Soviet nuclear freeze proposal.

⁵⁴ For accounts of the Soviet START opening positions, see Gellner, "U.S. and Soviet Proposals."; Leslie H. Gelb, "Offer by Moscow to Curb Bombers and Missiles Cited," New York Times, 1 Aug. 1982; Michael Getler, "Officials Cite Options Offered in Missile Talks," Washington Post, 1 Aug. 1982; and Robert C. Toth, "U.S. Weighs Surprising Soviet Offer on A-Arms," Los Angeles Times, 13 Sept. 1982. It

- reduce to a common ceiling of 1800 long-range missiles and bombers by 1990
- limit of 4 to 6 on numbers of Typhoon and Trident class submarines (with a maximum of 16 tubes on each SSBN)
- ban or limit cruise missiles with ranges exceeding 600 km (or 360mi)
- extension of confidence-building measures (such as advance warning of missile test flights)
- a freeze on development and deployment of new systems during the negotiations
- a 25 percent reduction across the board in arsenals of both sides
- retention of SALT II counting rules and precedents (such as SALT II provisions for ICBM modernization)
- a moratorium on all untested systems
- an overall ceiling on the number of long-range missile and bomber-carried warheads
- verification by National Technical Means (NTM)

The Soviet proposal for a nuclear weapons freeze was elaborated by Colonel General Nikolay Chervov during the course of the START negotiations in the following manner:

First, it implies a ban on quantitative increases of existing nuclear weapons (including carriers and warheads); second, it implies a ban on the production of new types of arms [--] weapons systems that have become unusable or damaged can be replaced only by similar

should be noted that on 3 Aug. 1982, administration officials said that public reports of the Soviet's negotiating position were "fundamentally in error" but did not elaborate, citing the confidential nature of the talks; see Reuter news bulletin in Boston Globe, 4 Aug. 1982, as cited in The Arms Control Reporter, (Sept. 1982), p. 611.B.43.

ones, just as it is the case with replacing normal losses; third, the plan also implies that modernizing existing carriers and nuclear warheads should be banned as well.⁵⁵

Such a freeze on strategic weapons systems would, in Chervov's view, contribute to the political objective of détente:

The implementation of the Soviet proposal on freezing nuclear arsenals, based on the principle of equality and equal security is likely to alleviate tension and to normalize international relations.⁵⁶

Chervov incorporated the Soviet theme that a condition of strategic parity existed, and that therefore the U.S. could safely participate in such a freeze:

It is obvious that in view of the existing military-strategic balance between the USSR and the United States, an agreement on banning increases of nuclear weapons is not likely to affect the security of any country whatsoever.⁵⁷

Those aspects of SALT II the Soviets desired to retain were a curious assortment of limits, and included bans on developing more than one "new type" ICBM; placing into earth orbit nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction; ocean floor basing of ballistic or cruise

⁵⁵ V. Morozov, "Interview with Colonel General Nikolay Chervov," Trud [Sofia, Bulgaria], 3 Aug. 1983, p. 3, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 5 Aug. 1983, p. AA4.

⁵⁶ Morozov, "Interview with Colonel General Nikolay Chervov," p. AA5.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

missiles or launchers; basing ballistic missiles on waterborne vehicles other than submarines; and development of maneuverable, self-guided and penetrating warheads for ballistic missiles.

The Soviets further proposed certain conditions for reaching a START accord. Progress in START was explicitly linked to U.S. forthcomingness in the INF negotiations. This meant cancelling the planned Pershing II and GLCM deployments as a precondition to making strategic arms reductions.⁵⁸ In essence, the Soviets were asking the United States to forego the planned INF deployments and accept stringent restrictions on cruise missiles -- all in return for both sides assuming an equal ceiling of 1,800 ICBMs and bombers and few limitations on corresponding Soviet INF deployments.

The Soviets had originally made cancelling NATO INF modernization a precondition for beginning negotiations. Now, after having agreed to begin negotiations without such a commitment, the Soviets were making it a precondition for reaching a START agreement. It should be noted that in November 1983, when the U.S. began INF deployments, the Soviets reverted back to their original position, and made cancellation and withdrawal of Pershing II and GLCM

⁵⁸ Gelb, "Offer by Moscow."

deployments a precondition for resuming arms control negotiations.

With regard to perpetuating the SALT II framework, the Soviets indicated a willingness to consider modifications to the treaty, but did not state what changes they might find acceptable. This was interpreted as an encouraging sign of flexibility by Western journalists.⁵⁹

At the opening of the START negotiations, the Soviets also warned that U.S. plans to modernize the American strategic nuclear arsenal could jeopardize the arms talks.⁶⁰ This warning was no doubt linked to the Soviet proposal for freezing development and deployment of new strategic systems at the outset of the negotiations.

Fundamental disagreements over the nature of "strategic stability" were evident in comparing the opening U.S. and Soviet START proposals, although this fact per se received scant attention in the U.S. To illustrate, the Soviets claimed that it was destabilizing for the U.S. to have over half of its nuclear missiles on hard-to-locate submarines.⁶¹ This is a remarkable concept, given that the United States thought it had successfully convinced the

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ "Soviet Says U.S. Moves Threaten Arms Accord," New York Times, 29 June 1982, citing TASS.

⁶¹ This Soviet claim is reported in an Associated Press news bulletin dated 12 Aug. 1982.

Soviets in SALT I and II that "moving to sea" was inherently stabilizing. Such Soviet views indicate that, for the Soviets, stability is a function of being able to target (i.e. render vulnerable) the adversary's nuclear assets -- precisely the opposite of the traditional American view that invulnerable nuclear weapons are the sine quo non of strategic stability. These disagreements were to have significant implications for the failure to achieve in START a redefinition of the basis for "parity" and "stability" as was achieved (albeit in flawed terms) in the SALT negotiations.

Round One of START ended with only some clarification of these differences to show for progress. Public reports of this round convey the impression that the two sides' positions were not fully presented during this period. For example, not until Round Three would some detail emerge in the Soviet START position.

During the recess between Rounds One and Two Soviet spokesmen went to work making the case for their position to the Western media. Maj. Gen. Viktor Starodubov, the General Staff representative on the Soviet START delegation, gave a three hour "interview" to members of the Western press in which he stressed the several principal themes the Soviets

had been pursuing in Geneva.⁶² Starodubov made Soviet strategic objectives in START very explicit. They were:

- (1) to place limits on U.S. cruise missile developments;
- (2) to insure that British and French independent nuclear forces were counted against the U.S. strategic total;
- (3) to impose limits on other U.S. strategic developments of concern to the Soviet Union, namely the Ohio-class nuclear ballistic missile submarine; and,
- (4) to stress the Soviet Union's commitment to "equality and equal security" as the basis of agreement.

Apparently in response to U.S. reluctance to accept Soviet proposals on cruise missiles, Starodubov emphasized the importance of limiting them as a quid pro quo for reductions in heavy missiles. The newspaper account of this talk quotes him as saying that "no arms control agreement 'will be of any value' if the United States starts a cruise missile race while seeking reduction in the number of heavy missiles." Cruise missiles were cited as a new weapon technology where the U.S. was seeking to gain unilateral advantages. Starodubov stated:

Security is our highest interest. We think it is dangerous if the United States is superior in some types of arms. The Americans could exploit superiority for political purposes, and from that, it would not be a long way to conflict.

⁶² Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert Asks Nuclear Balance," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982.

We have always been following the United States on the arms issue. History shows that the Soviet Union has never been superior to the United States in strategic arms.⁶³

Here again, the Soviets were trying to emphasize the importance of preventing the United States from breaching the existing strategic 'equilibrium' and seeking strategic superiority.

Certain U.S. analysts felt that the Soviet Union would try to eliminate ground-launched cruise missiles intended for deployment in Europe altogether, while banning or severely limiting sea-launched cruise missiles, and placing restrictions on air-launched cruise missiles. Apparently Moscow's proposed warhead limit in START would count 3,800 prospective U.S. air- and sea-launched cruise missiles.⁶⁴

With regard to nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), Starodubov indicated that the Soviets had proposed a ban on Ohio and Typhoon class submarines, but that the United States had rejected it. It is not clear whether he was referring to a proposal made during the course of the

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Leslie Gelb, "The Cruise Missile: Preventing New Arms Race With U.S. Is Seen as Key Soviet Goal in Geneva," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982. This article is a 'news analysis' based largely on the same presentation by Maj. Gen. Viktor Starodubov's remarks reported in Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert . . .," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982.

SALT II negotiations, or to a proposal made in START, but it was most probably a reference linked to a SALT II proposal to include submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) in the "new type" restriction. The Soviets rejected including SLBMs in that restriction and ultimately proposed exempting SLBMs from modernization limits altogether.⁶⁵

Starodubov, according to this report, "said the basic Soviet policy was peace and a stable balance," and "he repeatedly insisted that the Soviet Union sought only a balance in strategic weapons." The report ends with this quote from Starodubov's interview: "If a state has a policy of peace, it will never seek superiority. It is a dangerous madness to count on victory."⁶⁶

When the negotiators arrived for the second round, Viktor P. Karpov, head of the Soviet delegation, reiterated the charge that the United States was using the START negotiations to obtain superiority over the USSR, and placed responsibility on the United States to "open the road toward a mutually acceptable agreement." He also emphasized that the Soviet Union was interested in "radical reductions" and that progress could be achieved if Soviet START proposals were "treated in an objective manner."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ See Strobe Talbott, Endgame, pp. 161-163.

⁶⁶ Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert"

⁶⁷ "U.S. and Soviet Set to Renew Arms Talks," New York Times, 5 October 1982.

Obviously, the Soviet Union at this point would clearly have liked to see the U.S. make concessions leading to an agreement on the basis of the Soviet's opening position. Soviet public statements were intended strictly to put pressure on the United States to be more flexible in the negotiations, and the second round began with Soviet criticisms of the U.S. position, which forced U.S. officials to adopt a defensive stance.⁶⁸

Following the traditional meeting of the delegation heads at the commencement of Round Two, Karpov told a Soviet correspondent:

As for the U.S. proposals, they are one-sided in nature. The U.S. approach to the negotiations as spelled out in President Reagan's speech of 9 May this year cannot, as the Soviet side has repeatedly said, serve as the basis for agreement. One hopes that the U.S. side, from the outcome of the discussions already held, will make the necessary amendments in its position toward a mutually acceptable agreement.⁶⁹

Round Two of START is notable for Soviet criticisms of U.S. efforts to suggest progress was occurring in the negotiations, a theme the Soviets were to press with vigor throughout the negotiations. The Soviets kept up their propaganda offensive, hoping to portray the U.S. as making calculated attempts to block progress in the talks and

⁶⁸ "Soviet Negotiator Assails U.S. for Arms Stance," Washington Post, 5 October 1982.

⁶⁹ Moscow Domestic Service, 6 October 1982, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 7 October 1982, p. AA1.

trying to force a "deadlock." The following citation from the press gives some indication of the propaganda offensive:

Col. Gen. Nikolai Chervov, who is head of the general staff department on strategic weapons and a member of the inner leadership of the armed forces, accused the Reagan administration of deliberately seeking to create an impression that some progress was being made at the two sets of negotiations in Geneva.

'Actually, nothing of the sort has happened,' the general said in an interview distributed by the official news agency Novosti.⁷⁰

Chervov is further quoted as saying:

If the United States stand does not develop in a constructive direction, then naturally the Soviet Union will have no grounds to develop its stand. As a result, the negotiations will become deadlocked.

I would say that they are already approaching this condition.⁷¹

Note that once again, it is a Soviet military officer who is acting as a spokesman for the Soviet START position.

Interestingly, Brezhnev reportedly did not mention the START negotiations in either of his two speeches dealing with foreign policy before and during the second round of START.⁷² This may reflect his preoccupation with the INF

⁷⁰ Dusko Doder, "Soviet General Says U.S. Is Blocking Arms Talks," Washington Post, 3 November 1982.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

negotiations or the low priority with which he viewed START, or both.

On 5 November 1982, the Washington Post reported that the Reagan administration was preparing a major presidential speech on arms control that would involve those "confidence-building measures" the President had promised to offer the Soviet Union in a June 1982 speech in Berlin. These confidence-building measures were reportedly to include notification of strategic exercises, notification of missile launches, and expanded exchange of strategic forces data.⁷³ The administration may have intended this speech to give the impression of Presidential seriousness regarding strategic arms reductions. At least this was the speculation in the American press. U.S. press reports making this inference undercut American efforts to manage the environment within which it was conducting negotiations with the Soviet Union at Geneva.

Part way through the second round of START, on 10 November 1982, Leonid Brezhnev died. Yuri Andropov took over the top post in a surprisingly rapid succession. Western analysts quickly predicted that the new Soviet leadership "would begin an immediate campaign calling for a

⁷³ George C. Wilson and Michael Getler, "U.S. Drafting Major Arms Control Speech," Washington Post, 5 November 1982.

freeze and reduction of armaments, with the aim of gaining political advantage over the United States."⁷⁴

Soon after this change in leadership, Soviet spokesmen moved to convey the impression that the USSR desired closer ties and normalization of relations with the United States, and began urging the U.S. to make "concrete" actions for the purpose of "easing tensions." They buttressed these themes with both brandishings and inticements, as indicated in a report of a speech by Georgy Arbatov to an audience of 250 American businessmen.⁷⁵ The brandishings consisted of a warning that the Soviet Union was considering increasing its weapons programs:

Arbatov suggested that the Soviets were on the threshold of a decision to escalate the arms race to counter what he called an 'unprecedented' American arms buildup. He quoted Leonid Brezhnev as saying "shortly before his death that 'We are at a crossroads and we have to decide which way to go'."⁷⁶

The inticement consisted of a claim that this rearmament program as well as a propaganda counteroffensive were being postponed, apparently to give the U.S. time to display "concrete" actions:

⁷⁴ Charles W. Corddry, "Arms Reduction Push Expected from Moscow," Baltimore Sun, 12 November 1982, p. 14. The implications of this succession for Soviet START policy will be treated in Chapter Six.

⁷⁵ Dusko Doder, "Soviet Asks U.S. For Specific Moves," Washington Post, 18 November 1982.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

Well-informed Soviet sources said the new leadership has suspended for the next couple of months what was forecast by Brezhnev as a major counteroffensive in the fields of propaganda and weapons development, one that would undoubtedly have pushed Soviet-American relations into an even sharper confrontation.⁷⁷

The second round of START recessed on 2 December 1982. During this recess, a source "close to the US delegation" met in an off-the-record discussion with academic experts. Among the points made by this source the following are instructive regarding U.S. interpretations of the Soviet position and expectations of the negotiations:⁷⁸

-- Although the Soviets have proposed a reduction to 1800 launchers, they say they have some room to maneuver on the number.

-- But, the USSR says, the US cannot dictate its force structure. On the American argument for stability in land systems, 'in all honesty the Soviets are not impressed. They do not argue theories of deterrence and strategic planning'.

-- The Americans count the Backfire as a heavy bomber; the Soviets have not tried to include the FB-111 because that would require including the Backfire.

-- The USSR is worried about the Stealth bomber; if it can't see it, then it is the equivalent of a first

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ The Arms Control Reporter, December 1982, p. 611.B.58.

strike weapon, even though it goes slowly. The source said one US delegate handed her counterpart a blank page as the US statement on Stealth; he was very disturbed.

-- Launcher limits will be kept as the best way to verify, but launcher limits will be used to count missiles and warheads. The Minuteman and the SS-18 will not count equally.

-- US cancellation of MX production would bring no concession from the Soviets.

-- The Soviets would probably phase out the SS-16 if an agreement were reached.⁷⁹

-- No progress in the talks may be expected for six months to a year, while the USSR watches the US go through the appropriations process and watches Europe decide about missile deployment there.

A number of developments occurred in the days and weeks following the close of Round Two relevant to our examination of Soviet interests and/or disinterests in reducing strategic arms. First, on 8 December 1982, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to delete funds for MX missile production from the fiscal 1983 defense appropriation bill.⁸⁰ This move forced President Reagan to compromise with the Senate over its impending vote,

⁷⁹ The SS-16 is outlawed by SALT.

⁸⁰ Charles W. Corddry, "House Rebuffs Reagan, Cuts MX Start-up Funds," Baltimore Sun, 8 December 1982.

proposing that funds be approved, but not spent until after a basing mode had been settled. The Senate subsequently voted to permit MX production, but only on the condition that both houses of Congress approved a basing plan first. A joint House-Senate conference committee ultimately rejected approving funds for MX production.⁸¹

Second, the Soviets announced a major INF initiative that focused Western media attention away from the apparently deadlocked START negotiations and attempted to portray Soviet flexibility on the European strategic situation.

On 21 December 1982 Soviet leader Yuri Andropov gave a speech to the Central Committee on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Soviet state in which he advocated reducing the numbers of nuclear warheads while establishing strict limitations on nuclear weapon modernization, saying:

We are prepared to reduce our strategic arms by more than 25 percent. U.S. arms, too, must be reduced accordingly, so that the two states have the same number of strategic delivery vehicles. We also propose that the number of nuclear warheads should be substantially

⁸¹ "Production Money for MX Deleted," Baltimore Sun, 20 December 1982. See also, Margot Hornblower, "\$232 Billion Voted for Defense: Reagan Rebuffed on MX Funds," Washington Post, 21 December 1982. The impact of the MX program difficulties will be treated at greater length in the chapter on bargaining leverage.

lowered and that improvement of nuclear weapons should be maximally restricted.⁸²

Andropov also endorsed confidence-building measures, and warned that the Soviet Union would counter new U.S. weapons (the MX and cruise missiles in particular).

The Soviets used the recess between Rounds Two and Three to restate their START position, while declining to elaborate, modify, or otherwise alter that position. An important Pravda article, distributed to the Western press prior to its publication in the Soviet Union, harshly accused the United States of "hampering and actually obstructing the talks."⁸³ According to multiple Western and Soviet sources, the Soviet START position, as of the end of Round Two, included the following elements:⁸⁴

⁸² "Excerpts From Speech by Andropov On Medium-Range Nuclear Missiles," New York Times, 22 December 1982. See also U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1982, "Report by Soviet General Secretary Andropov: Nuclear Arms Reduction Proposals and Confidence-Building Measures [Extracts], December 21, 1982," pp. 917-922; and which notes that: "The report was delivered at the joint meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation devoted to celebrating the 60th anniversary of the USSR."

⁸³ Dusko Doder, "Soviets Assail U.S. For Talks Impasse On Strategic Arms," Washington Post, 2 Jan. 1983.

⁸⁴ TASS in press release of USSR United Nations mission, 1 Jan. 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, Jan. 1983, p. 611.B.65; "The Peoples' Will Must be Reckoned With," Pravda, 25 November 1982, p. 6, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 26 November 1982, pp. AA1-AA5; Robert Gillette, "Soviets Add New Twist to Talk Demands," Los Angeles Times, 2 Jan. 1983; Dusko Doder, "Soviets Assail

- (1) a freeze on strategic weapons development and deployment;
- (2) phased reductions in land- and submarine-based ballistic missiles and strategic bombers to a total of 1800 launchers for each side by the year 1990;
- (3) a reduction in the number of warheads on each side to equal levels;
- (4) U.S. agreement not to deploy Pershing II and GLCM in Europe;
- (5) a prohibition on cruise missiles with ranges in excess of 600 kilometers;
- (6) establishment of agreed restrictions on modernization of existing weapons; and,
- (7) agreement to certain confidence-building measures.

The Soviets proposed several specific confidence-building measures, of which three were made public. These included a restriction banning heavy bombers and aircraft carriers from operating in "zones adjoining the territory of the other side;" advance notification of "mass takeoffs" of strategic and 'forward-based' aircraft; and, establishment of exclusionary zones in which "antisubmarine activities of the other side would be banned" but in which missile-carrying submarines would be able to operate.⁸⁵ Several

U.S. For Talks Impasse."; Steven Strasser, Robert B. Cullen, and John Walcott, "Andropov Aims At the Zero Option," Newsweek, 3 Jan. 1983, pp. 20-21; and John Kohan and Erik Amfitheatrof, "Point and Counterpoint: Andropov Formalizes Proposals While U.S. and Its Allies Say No," Time, 3 Jan. 1983, p. 56.

⁸⁵ Doder, "Soviets Assail U.S. For Talks Impasse On Strategic Arms,"

weeks after these proposals were made, a Soviet military official endorsed the concept of "notification in good time about any launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles," but this did not appear to fully satisfy the U.S. desire for prior notification of individual launchings.⁸⁶

Pressures on both the U.S. and the Soviet Union for substantial achievements in arms control at this point appeared to result in mutual interest in forms of confidence-building measures. In November of 1982 President Reagan had proposed advance notification of ICBM and MRBM test launches as well as advance notice of major global military maneuvers. U.S. officials indicated prior to the beginning of Round Three that agreement on such measures could be achieved quickly.⁸⁷ Updating the U.S.-Soviet "Hot Line" would later become part of this effort to rapidly formalize some form of agreement on confidence-building measures.⁸⁸ However, a Soviet commentator would later

⁸⁶ Moscow television "Studio 9" 29 Jan. 1983, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 31 Jan. 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, Feb. 1983, p. 611.B.72.

⁸⁷ For President Reagan's November 1982 Confidence-Building Measures proposal, see "White House Fact Sheet on Confidence-Building Measures, November 22, 1982," in U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament 1982, (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1985), pp. 829-832. For American hopes that confidence-building measures could be agreed upon quickly, see William Beecher, "US Planning to Counter Move by Soviets On Arms Control," Boston Globe, 13 Jan. 1983.

⁸⁸ See Walter S. Mossberg, "U.S. Seeks Better Hotline Links to Soviets To Curb Risk of Accidental Nuclear War,"

criticize the U.S. confidence-building measure proposals as aimed at domestic critics who questioned the administration's commitment to arms control.⁸⁹

In addition to restating their START and INF positions, the Soviets used the 60th anniversary celebration of the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to make an appeal addressed to "the Parliaments, Governments, Political Parties, and Peoples of the World," (continuing a long and recognized Soviet tradition of appealing to the 'masses' over the heads of Western governments and attempting to appear as the 'champions' of peace). The following extracts shed light on Soviet START and INF priorities, and on the Soviet view of détente in the 1970s. They also show the remarkable continuity between Brezhnev's and Andropov's arms control policies:⁹⁰

The need for peace takes on special significance today, when States possess weapons capable of destroying human civilization and all life on earth and when the threat of war, which had been made appreciably more remote in the 1970s, has again begun to intensify and international tension is growing visibly more severe.

Wall Street Journal, 13 April 1983; and, Storer Rowley, "Updated U.S.-Soviet 'Hot Line' Urged," Chicago Tribune, 13 April 1983.

⁸⁹ Vladimir Bogachev of TASS, 13 April 1983 in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 14 April 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, May 1983, p. 611.B.89.

⁹⁰ "Soviet Appeal Addressed 'To the Parliaments, Governments, Political Parties, and Peoples of the World,' December 22, 1984," reprinted in Documents on Disarmament, 1982, p. 923.

All the efforts of States, the activities of Governments, organized political forces and all citizens of every country should now be addressed to preventing a nuclear catastrophe. Nothing is or can be more important than this.⁹¹

This statement then reiterated the basic principles elaborated by the Soviets in earlier rounds of START:

We, the authorized representatives of the Soviet people, solemnly declare that, in keeping with the Leninist policy of peace and international co-operation, the Soviet will do all in its power to avert war. We reaffirm that, in accordance with the commitment it has undertaken, the Soviet Union will not be the first to use nuclear weapons, and we call once again upon the other nuclear Powers to undertake a similar commitment.

We declare that the Soviet Union is prepared, on a basis of reciprocity with the United States of America, to freeze its arsenal of nuclear weapons. We urge the speedy and productive completion of the Soviet-United States talks on the limitation and reduction of strategic arms and on the limitation of nuclear arms in Europe, and we urge the early conclusion of an agreement on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe.⁹²

Other aspects of Soviet START policy were expressed at this time. Either during the first or second rounds, the Soviet Union proposed limits on the numbers and missile loadings of Ohio and Typhoon class SSBNs.⁹³ Also, at some point during Round Two of START the United States proposed reducing by two-thirds the numbers of SS-18 and SS-19

⁹¹ TASS, 19 Jan. 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, Feb. 1983, p. 611.B.69.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

launchers as an indirect effort to limit Soviet throw-weight.⁹⁴

III. FIRST MAJOR CHANGES IN NEGOTIATING POSITIONS

The first major changes in both U.S. and Soviet negotiating positions at START occurred in the third round. However, several major events occurred prior to the beginning of Round Three of START that were to have an impact on the negotiations.

In January 1983 Soviet officials began making threats to "reassess" their INF negotiating position if GLCM and Pershing II deployments proceeded as NATO planned. Ending the START negotiations was considered a possible element of the Soviet reassessment.⁹⁵ These blandishments began emerging before the INF or START negotiators had much chance to explore the feasibility of reasonable compromises, suggesting an unyielding Soviet position on cancellation of the NATO INF modernization plans. Also, these Soviet threats emerged at the same time the U.S. was signaling renewed flexibility in its INF negotiating position.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Strobe Talbott in Time, 7 Feb. 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, Feb. 1983, p. 611.B.71; and, Strobe Talbott, "A Tougher Stand for START," Time, 7 Feb. 1983, p. 28.

⁹⁵ Bernard Gwertzman, "Reagan Is Hopeful On Missile Accord With the Russians," New York Times, 21 Jan. 1983.

⁹⁶ See the Associated Press article "U.S. Open to Options, Nitze Says," 20 Jan. 1983; and, Daniel Southerland,

Another initiative was forthcoming, not directly related to the negotiations but which would have a profound impact in the post-START era on Soviet interests in strategic arms reductions. On 23 March 1983 President Reagan declared:

Tonight, consistent with our obligations of the ABM Treaty and recognizing the need for closer consultation with our allies, I'm taking an important first step. I am directing a comprehensive and intensive effort to define a long-term research and development program to begin to achieve our ultimate goal of eliminating the threat posed by strategic nuclear missiles. This could pave the way for arms control measures to eliminate the weapons themselves. We seek neither military superiority nor political advantage. Our only purpose -- one all people share -- is to search for ways to reduce the danger of nuclear war.⁹⁷

President Reagan's inauguration of the Strategic Defense Initiative brought immediate criticism from the Soviet Union, but did not have an early impact on U.S. or Soviet positions in the START negotiations. The Soviet Union declined to incorporate their opposition to the U.S. SDI program into their START proposals. Even though this initiative was announced by the President during the course of an on-going U.S.-Soviet strategic arms negotiation, the

"Nitze Optimistic About Arms Talks," Christian Science Monitor, 20 Jan. 1983.

⁹⁷ President Reagan's speech announcing renewed emphasis on strategic defenses has been reprinted and excerpted in numerous sources. The citation given is taken from Ronald Reagan, "Launching the SDI," in Zbigniew Brzezinski, ed., Promise or Peril: The Strategic Defense Initiative, (Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1986), pp. 49-50.

Soviet Union waited until mid-1984, months after walking out of START, to begin a major campaign to subject SDI to arms control. Soviet reasons for failing to take advantage of the START or INF forums to do so may have reflected Soviet expectations that SDI would remain a minor research effort, or that it would eventually be defeated by domestic opposition.

Two days before the START negotiations resumed in Geneva, Switzerland, President Reagan proposed a summit between himself and Soviet General Secretary Yuri Andropov. Directly countering the Soviet propaganda effort aimed at the people of Western Europe, President Reagan made the offer in a letter addressed to this same audience. It was read in a speech by Vice President George Bush in West Berlin. The President said in part:

Just as our allies can count on the United States to defend Europe at all cost, you can count on us to spare no effort to reach a fair and meaningful agreement that will reduce the Soviet nuclear threat.

In this spirit, I have asked Vice President Bush, in the city where East meets West, to propose to Soviet General Secretary Andropov that he and I meet wherever and whenever he wants in order to sign an agreement banning U.S. and Soviet intermediate-range land-based nuclear missile weapons from the face of the earth.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ "Reagan's Letter to Europeans," New York Times, 1 Feb. 1983. See also John Vinocur, "Reagan Suggests Session on Arms With Andropov," Ibid.

Andropov subsequently rejected Reagan's offer in harsh terms, saying the President's position was simply a restatement of his earlier "zero option" INF proposal, and that the President's invitation was "a propaganda game." He further accused the United States of being solely to blame for the lack of progress and apparent deadlock in Geneva. However, news reports noted that "Andropov's tone was restrained and he did not repeat rhetorical charges made by other Soviet officials earlier in the day that Reagan's proposals were a tactical ploy to deceive West Europeans and lend support to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in the March 6 elections."⁹⁹

In a meeting with the Press on January 14, President Reagan declared his determination to achieve progress in arms control negotiations. At the same time it was reported that U.S. negotiators "be empowered to listen to and explore new Soviet proposals . . . but not to offer any new American proposals." Secretary of State George Shultz was reportedly resisting changes in the U.S. position for fear of appearing to be "stampeded" by the Soviets.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Dusko Doder, "Soviets Bar U.S. Terms For Summit," Washington Post, 2 Feb. 1983.

¹⁰⁰ Bernard Gwertzman, "President Pledges To Make Progress On Arms Control," New York Times, 15 Jan. 1983; and, Oswald Johnston, "White House Seeks Initiative on Arms," Los Angeles Times, 17 Jan. 1983.

It was prior to Round Three that the U.S. began considering adopting Congressional-sponsored proposals for an "arms build-down" whereby the superpowers would be obligated to decommission two older warheads for every new one deployed.¹⁰¹ The idea was to provide for American modernization plans (MX and Trident) while also mandating substantial reductions in strategic nuclear warheads.

The Soviet Union began 1983 with conciliatory rhetoric. Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko, in a public relations visit to West Germany in January, hinted that the Soviets might be willing to seek progress in all sets of negotiations then underway between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, including the INF, START, and MBFR negotiations.¹⁰² This assumed, of course, that progress in INF would receive the same priority in the West that it did in Moscow.

Round Three (2 Feb. 1983 to 31 March 1983)

The U.S. and Soviet delegations arrived in Geneva for the beginning of Round Three stating that progress would depend on the degree of interest and flexibility of the other side. Viktor P. Karpov, the Soviet START ambassador,

¹⁰¹ Michael Getler, "Proposal for 'Arms Build-Down' Being Weighed by White House," Washington Post, 19 Jan. 1983.

¹⁰² Hal Piper, "Soviet's Hints for Negotiation on All Arms Blur Geneva Focus," Baltimore Sun, 20 Jan. 1983.

stated that in the "interests of global security" the United States should "respond constructively" to the Soviet proposals for a twenty-five percent cut in all strategic delivery vehicles (including intercontinental missiles and long-range bombers) and a freeze in the development of new strategic weapons.¹⁰³ On 4 February 1983 U.S. Vice President George Bush met separately in one hour meetings with the Soviet INF and START delegations, assuring them that the United States was "deadly serious" about reaching an INF agreement.¹⁰⁴

Mid-way through Round Three intense pressure began to build within the U.S. for American flexibility to break the deadlock in Geneva. Senator Charles Percy urged the President to send Secretary of State George Shultz or his deputy to the talks to find a solution to the impasse.¹⁰⁵

In a symposium on improving U.S.-Soviet relations attended by several members of Congress as well as members of the Soviet Embassy staff, Vadim Kuznetsov, a first secretary at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, said: "I must

¹⁰³ "Arms Negotiators Return to Geneva," New York Times, 1 Feb. 1983.

¹⁰⁴ Michael Getler, "U.S. Is 'Deadly Serious' On Arms Reduction, Bush Tells Soviets," Washington Post, 5 Feb. 1983.

¹⁰⁵ John McLean in Chicago Tribune, 16 March 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, March 1983, p. 611.B.83.

tell you frankly, candidly, there is no progress -- deadlock."¹⁰⁶

At some point during Round Three the Soviet Union presented a draft treaty, but details were not made public until after Round Four had begun. Round Three ended on 31 March 1983. Round Four would begin 8 June 1983.

Just after the third round of START recessed on 31 March 1983, an event transpired that would have a profound and immediate impact on the U.S. negotiating position. On 6 April 1983, the so-called Scowcroft Commission Report was submitted to President Reagan.¹⁰⁷ The Scowcroft Commission had essentially been charged with rationalizing the Administration's determination to proceed with MX missile development. Its findings placed a great deal of emphasis

¹⁰⁶ "Arms Talks Deadlocked, Soviets Tell Congress," Chicago Tribune, 11 March 1983.

¹⁰⁷ Report of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces, April 1983, Reprinted by the Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, November 1983. For a Soviet reaction to the Scowcroft Commission's report, calling it "a dangerous new step to whip up the arms race and exacerbate the threat of nuclear war," see Tomas Kolesnichenko, "Sinister Farce," Pravda, 23 April 1983, p. 5, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 16 (18 May 1983), pp. 15-16.

on arms control.¹⁰⁸ There were four principal arms control implications of the Commission's report:

- (1) arms control could and should be a major element of U.S. strategy and defense policy;
- (2) MX deployment and Small ICBM development were seen primarily in terms of providing arms control bargaining leverage;
- (3) the argument for throw-weight as a unit of limitation was weakened by down-grading the importance of throw-weight as a measure of the strategic balance; and,
- (4) the Commission chose to go with a near-term increase in capability (by recommending the deployment of MX in existing Minuteman silos) rather than a longer-term more expensive increase in survivability (by postponing MX deployment until a new basing mode could be developed).

The Scowcroft Commission had a choice between survivability and capability (i.e. a mobile SICBM or hardened MX versus a near-term increase in destructive potential via more warheads in less survivable basing modes). By choosing to forego greater survivability, it placed increased pressure on arms control to solve problems of U.S. nuclear force survivability. Ironically this

¹⁰⁸ For an analysis of the Report of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces, including its arms control implications, see Harry L. Wrenn, "Strategic Force Modernization: The Scowcroft Commission Recommendations and Alternatives," Issue Brief No. IB83080, (Washington, D.C.: The Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, updated 9 Jan. 1984); and U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Review of Arms Control Implications of the Report of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces: Hearings, 17, 19, and 24 May 1983, (Washington, D.C.: U.S.G.P.O., 1983).

deprived the Soviets of incentives for resorting to arms control by making U.S. strategic nuclear forces more vulnerable to a Soviet surprise attack without having to give up anything in a negotiating forum.

In effect, the Russians should have interpreted the Scowcroft Commission as a sign of healthy U.S. interest in arms control accords. The Scowcroft Commission had essentially recommended a Presidential decision to pursue American security primarily through arms control. The Reagan administration began almost immediately to consider revising its START proposals along lines compatible with the Commission recommendations.¹⁰⁹

Brent Scowcroft later indicated that certain Soviet officials, among them Georgi Arbatov, head of the Institute for the Study of the U.S.A. and Canada, responded positively to the idea of strategic and arms control emphasis on small ICBMs.¹¹⁰

The fact that this re-consideration of U.S. START policy was made public at this time could not have helped but signal a softening of the American position to the Soviet Union and provided incentives for the Soviets to withhold any contemplated concessions while waiting to see

¹⁰⁹ See William Beecher, "US Considers Altering Plan in Arms Talks," Boston Globe, 16 April 1983.

¹¹⁰ Charles W. Corddry, "Moscow Called Receptive On Arms," Baltimore Sun, 24 May 1983.

what concessions the U.S. would make on its own. Public congressional pressures on the Administration to alter its position, and linking support for the MX program to progress in arms talks, further reinforced this undermining of the U.S. bargaining position in START.¹¹¹

In letters sent to nine members of the U.S. House of Representatives and three Senators in early May 1983 President Reagan endorsed the 'build-down' concept and promised other changes in the U.S. START position.¹¹² Changes that would place greater emphasis on limiting warheads versus missile launchers were endorsed by a National Security Council meeting that same month, a White

¹¹¹ The following press articles give an indication of the public nature of the pressures on the Reagan administration as well as the publicity surrounding the Administration's consideration of changes in its START proposals: William Beecher, "US Considers Altering Plan In Arms Talks," Boston Globe, 16 April 1983; "U.S. Studies Shift in Stand at Strategic Arms Talks," New York Times, 30 April 1983; Charles W. Corddry, "Senators Urge Reagan To Revise Strategy for START, Stressing Arms 'Build-Down,'" Baltimore Sun, 3 May 1983; Charles W. Corddry, "'Build-Down' Concept May Lead to Compromise On Nuclear Arms," Baltimore Sun, 9 May 1983; Lou Cannon, "President Considering Revised Arms Proposal," Washington Post, 11 May 1983; and, Steven V. Roberts, "U.S. Said To Move Toward New Plan On Strategic Arms," New York Times, 11 May 1983.

¹¹² "Text of President's Letter on Arms Control Policy," New York Times, 12 May 1983; Steven V. Roberts, "President Pledges To Shift Approach On Arms Control," Ibid.; Lou Cannon and George C. Wilson, "President Backs Arms Build-Down," Washington Post, 13 May 1983; Michael Getler and Walter Pincus, "Reagan Arms Control Actions Move MX Missile Closer to Reality," Washington Post, 13 May 1983; and Hedrick Smith, "Reagan Is Reportedly Easing His Stand on Strategic Arms," New York Times, 14 May 1983.

House official indicated that the main issue under consideration with regard to the administration's proposal for a limit of 850 missiles on each side was whether to raise the number or do away with a ceiling on numbers of launchers altogether.¹¹³

While the U.S. side placed emphasis on limiting the numbers of warheads, the Soviets continued to stress missile numbers as the basic unit of account in START.¹¹⁴ There were other themes that remained unchanged in Soviet views of the U.S. START position. In an interview published in a West German periodical, Andropov criticized the basis of the U.S. approach to START in the following terms:

. . . the United States is a sea power. We are a land power and most of our nuclear weapons were deployed on land. Now the Americans suggest reductions in land-based nuclear weapons, leaving sea-based missiles aside. We, naturally, take exception to this approach. We for our part take account of all the types of nuclear weapons available to both sides and suggest even reductions in them on both sides, reductions to the point of their eventual complete elimination.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Steven V. Roberts, "U.S. Said To Move Toward New Plan On Strategic Arms," New York Times, 11 May 1983; and, Hedrick Smith, "Reagan Calls Meeting on Arms Talks," New York Times, 10 May 1983.

¹¹⁴ William Beecher, "US to Alter Arms-Limit Proposal," Boston Globe, 20 May 1983.

¹¹⁵ Rudolf Augstein in Der Spiegel, cited by TASS, 24 April 1983 in USSR UN press release dated 26 April 1983, reprinted in The Arms Control Reporter, May 1983, pp. 611.B.92-93.

Andropov was, of course, casting the Soviet position in the most reasonable light possible, while distorting the contents of the U.S. START proposals.

Soviet leaders issued major restatements of Soviet positions in the START and INF talks in April 1983, during the recess between rounds III and IV, but none of these commentaries presented any new sign of Soviet flexibility or compromise and all reflected themes that had been repeated countless times before.¹¹⁶ On 28 May 1982, Pravda published a statement saying the U.S. intends "to retain virtually intact the mainstays of its nuclear arsenal" while compelling the Soviets to "reduce the most modern type of armaments." In an obvious response to trends in United States thinking on START, it further reiterated that the Soviet Union sought reductions in both warheads and missiles.¹¹⁷

United States START policy was in a state of flux as Round Four (8 June 1983 to 2 August 1983) began. It seems reasonable to speculate that had the Soviet Union placed high priority on obtaining a strategic arms reduction

¹¹⁶ See Gromyko in Pravda, 3 April 1983, pp. 4-5, and in Izvestia, 4 April 1983, pp. 2-3, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 14 (4 May 1983), pp. 1-7; and, Andropov in Pravda and Izvestia, 25 April 1983, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 17 (25 May 1983), pp. 1-6.

¹¹⁷ Pravda, 28 May 1983, cited in The Arms Control Reporter, June 1983, p. 611.B.100.

agreement it would have exploited this obvious transition period in U.S. policy, perhaps by making a major initiative of its own. Instead, it responded with threats of "creating a counterpart of its own" to the MX, support for which had been barely won by the President's agreeing to modify his START proposals.¹¹⁸

In any event, President Reagan instructed his chief negotiator "to examine all Soviet proposals seriously and to be flexible in our responses wherever this would be consistent with our overall objectives."¹¹⁹ A senior administration official noted: "Everything is on the table. We are prepared to negotiate everything."¹²⁰

Upon arriving for this new round of START, the acting head of the Soviet delegation (Karpov remained in Moscow apparently for medical reasons) remarked that the Soviet

¹¹⁸ "Soviet Union Vows to Build A Missile Equivalent to MX," Washington Post, 27 May 1983. The Soviet Union was, of course, in the process of building several new types of missiles, all of which were either comparable to, or larger than the American MX. See U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power 1984, (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, April 1984), p. 24.

¹¹⁹ "Reagan Urges Flexibility in Arms Talks," San Francisco Chronicle, 2 June 1983; "Reagan Will Study Strategy On Arms Talks," Peninsula Times Tribune, 2 June 1983; Lou Cannon and Margot Hornblower, "Reagan Vows U.S. Flexibility at New Round of Arms Cut Talks," Washington Post, 8 June 1983; and Michael Getler, "Arms Proposal Indicates More Flexibility," Washington Post, 9 June 1983.

¹²⁰ "New U.S. Stance On Arms Control: Reagan Stresses Flexibility," San Francisco Chronicle, 9 June 1983.

Union favored mutual substantial cuts in long-range nuclear weapons:

We proceed from the assumption that such agreement is both possible and necessary. Both sides must be equally interested in it. . . . We do not favor competition in the military field.

Progress in the negotiations will be assured if the other side demonstrates its political will and willingness to engage in a businesslike search for agreement in strict conformity with the principle of equality and equal security.¹²¹

On 8 June 1983 when START resumed, the United States government put forth new proposals incorporating many of the Scowcroft Commission recommendations and bowing to heavy pressure from Congress.¹²² These modifications to the early U.S. START position were tabled in draft treaty form in July 1983. These changes included:

- merging Phase I and II
- relaxing the ceiling of 850 deployed missiles (for a new ceiling between 1,100 and 1,200)
- some softening on the 2,500 ICBM warhead limit, but retaining the overall 5,000 warhead ceiling
- agreeing to ALCM limits at the start of an agreement

¹²¹ "Soviets Say They Are Prepared To Negotiate Deep Missile Cuts," Baltimore Sun, 7 June 1983.

¹²² Lou Cannon, "Reagan Reveals New Plan on Arms Cut Talks," Washington Post, 9 June 1983; Karen Elliott House, "Reagan's Revisions of Arms-Control Plan Stress Flexibility, Seek a Soviet Response," Wall Street Journal, 9 June 1983; see also, "New U.S. Stance On Arms Control."

-- agreeing to fix ALCM bomber loadings below the SALT II limits

-- agreeing to flexibility on ways to redress the U.S.-Soviet throw-weight disparity

Moscow responded to these obviously major concessions with predictable skepticism. The government press agency TASS commented that by raising his proposed limit of 850 missiles, Reagan sought both to facilitate deployment of the MX and Small ICBM while still forcing the Soviet Union to reduce its land-based missiles. The Soviet commentary also reiterated the charge that the United States was unrelentingly seeking "military superiority and pressing the Soviet Union into unilateral disarmament." The President's proposals were summarily dismissed as "mere words, and nothing more: "no desire to achieve a mutually acceptable accord, which the President talked about, is in sight. On the contrary, his statement reveals something quite different -- and endeavor to undermine in every way the principle of equality and equal security of the sides which was the basis of the SALT-I and SALT-II talks."¹²³

Yet, no similar concessions in the Soviet position were forthcoming. While the U.S. position evidenced a clear softening of its own original proposal and began movement

¹²³ Pravda, 10 June 1983, p. 5, and Izvestia, 11 June 1983, p. 4, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 23 (6 July 1983), p. 14.

toward the original Soviet proposal, the Soviet Union made no change in its 1,800 missile limit.

However, the Soviet position at this point falls short of being blatantly hypocritical for one reason. The Soviets saw through the President's need to respond to domestic Congressional pressures for the sake of keeping his strategic modernization program reasonably intact. The New York Times report of the Soviet reaction notes that "TASS said the President's latest offer was the result of a commitment to Congress to intensify efforts at Geneva in return for support for his plan to deploy 100 MX missiles."¹²⁴ The Soviet Union continued to stick by its draft treaty, submitted earlier.

Here, then, is further evidence that lack of American unity behind the President's strategic modernization program and his compatible arms control proposals was a source of Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement during the START negotiations.

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko, gave a speech to the Supreme Soviet on 16 June 1983. He stressed the following themes:

- (1) previous U.S.-Soviet arms agreements had "special importance" to the Soviet Union, and SALT II "could have become a serious accomplishment;"

¹²⁴ TASS commentary cited by John F. Burns, "Moscow Says Shift In U.S. Arms Stand Is No Basic Change," New York Times, 10 June 1983.

- (2) the Soviet Union is determined to proceed "on the basis of the existing parity, along the road of arms limitation and reduction so that at any given moment the balance is preserved but on an increasingly lower level;"
- (3) a "militarist intoxication" pervades U.S. politics which discounts the horrifying character of nuclear war and pronounces it "permissible and even feasible;"
- (4) the United States is bent on achieving strategic nuclear superiority, and the Soviet Union is equally determined to prevent it;
- (5) U.S.-Soviet agreements "must be based on the principle of equality and equal security;"
- (6) the current U.S. administration has "derailed the SALT II treaty and broken off a whole set of negotiations that were gathering momentum or were close to achieving practical results," and "is pursuing an obstructionist line at the Soviet-American talks on these questions that are going on in Geneva;" and,
- (7) while the United States' current approach to the Geneva negotiations has the appearance of flexibility, this is purely for show, and is intended "to lull . . . to deceive public opinion, [and] to neutralize the mounting opposition to Washington's militaristic preparations."¹²⁵

Following his harsh criticism of the Reagan administration's arms control proposals and defense programs, Gromyko added that "We want smoother relations with the United States in the knowledge that this is important to prevent war."¹²⁶

¹²⁵ "Excerpts From Gromyko Speech Reviewing Soviet Union's Foreign Policy," New York Times, 17 June 1983.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

Gromyko also mentioned Soviet concerns regarding the militarization of space, and urged concluding "an international treaty on the nondeployment of weapons of any kind in space, as proposed by the Soviet Union."¹²⁷ This was an early Soviet arms control response to the President's strategic defense initiative.

Late in June 1983 it was disclosed that the Reagan administration was prepared to offer a "fair trade" for the MX missile. The United States would forego deploying the planned 100 MX missiles if the Soviet Union agreed to dismantle all its SS-18 and SS-19 missiles.¹²⁸ Here was an example of the United States attempting to bargain with an undeployed system against deployed Soviet systems, and whose total planned deployment would still be dwarfed by the size of the Soviet force. (The Soviets then had approximately 638 SS-18s and 19s.)

Several weeks into Round Four a report surfaced in the American media that U.S. officials had detected Soviet signs of flexibility and serious bargaining. These indications included:

-- withdrawing the demand that the United States deploy no more than four to six Trident-equipped submarines;

127 Ibid.

128 "U.S. Proposes 'Fair Trade' With Russia to Abandon MX," San Francisco Chronicle, 22 June 1983.

-- dropping the proposal that Trident missile loading be reduced from 24 to 16;

-- softening the demand for a ban on all cruise missiles with ranges greater than 360 miles; and,

-- apparent hints at Soviet willingness to seriously consider U.S. proposals for confidence-building measures by agreeing to participate in a special working group¹²⁹

These reports also gave the first indication that the politics associated with the 1984 American presidential campaign may have a bearing on Soviet interests or disinterests in a strategic arms reduction agreement. The speculation was that the Soviets would be more likely to seek agreement in the summer of 1984 if President Reagan's prospects for re-election appeared good. As William Beecher explained in the Boston Globe:

From a Soviet perspective, it might be a lot easier to get an agreement with a first-term President eager to improve his re-election prospects with a foreign triumph than with a second-term President with a new mandate and no need to face the voters again.¹³⁰

Beecher also reported that the United States was then preparing a draft strategic arms reduction treaty. Several

¹²⁹ Michael Getler, "Soviets Modify Part of Position on Missile Cuts," Washington Post, 28 June 1983; William Beecher, "Soviets Hint at Some Flexibility in Arms Talks, US Officials Say," Boston Globe, 26 June 1983; and "Arms-Talk Softening Reported," Associated Press in Denver Post, 26 June 1983.

¹³⁰ "Soviets Hint at Some Flexibility.."

elements of that draft treaty, as reported, appeared to make significant concessions to the Soviets. For example, Beecher noted that the United States would probably concede to the Soviet demand for including bomber limits in START by proposing a limit of 400 bombers carrying anywhere from 20 to 28 air-launched cruise missiles. The American draft treaty also appeared to offer room for flexibility on the issue of throw-weight.¹³¹ The president was expected to relax his call for an 850 ceiling on ICBMs as well.¹³²

On 7 July 1983 the United States submitted a draft treaty at the START negotiations designed to meet certain principal Soviet objections to earlier American stances. It had the following limits:¹³³

- 1,250 land- and sea-based missiles
- of which no more than 850 could be land-based
- a sublimit of 210 on SS-17, 18, and 19 missiles
- a sublimit of 110 on SS-18 missiles
- a total of 5,000 strategic nuclear warheads
- of which no more than 2,500 could be on land-based missiles
- an unspecified ceiling on throw-weight

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Michael Getler, "U.S. Arms Control Changes Fail to Impress Moscow, Experts Say," Washington Post, 27 June 1983.

¹³³ Charles W. Corddry, "U.S. Offers Soviets Draft of Arms Treaty," Baltimore Sun, 8 July 1983.

- a limit of 400 bombers with an unspecified limit on the numbers of bomber-carried cruise missiles

The U.S. proposal also reportedly called for tough verification provisions that went beyond those provided for in SALT II; namely, no interference with National Technical Means (NTM) of verification, no concealment of missile development and test sights, and no encryption of flight test telemetry.¹³⁴ SALT II had stipulated only no encryption of telemetry deemed vital to a determination of compliance.

On 17 July 1983 Pravda published an editorial criticizing the U.S. for "attempts at legalizing its unprecedented arms race under the cover of the talks" and denied that the U.S. position in the talks had undergone any change. It sought to distinguish the Soviet approach to START from the U.S. approach by saying that Washington had adopted "selective" reduction policy, singling out certain groups of strategic weapons for reduction while leaving others unlimited:

The USSR stands for a comprehensive approach -- all strategic delivery vehicles would be subject to restrictions and reductions in their aggregate, not in some artificially singled out groups or portions. Likewise, all nuclear warheads would be taken into account within the framework of the agreed-upon ceiling. The Soviet Union concretely proposes that the total aggregate level of nuclear warheads on strategic

¹³⁴ William Beecher, "Arms Talks: A Hint of Flexibility," Boston Globe, 14 July 1983.

delivery vehicles of the sides should be below the number of nuclear warheads which the United States now has. Exactly this approach is the basis of the draft treaty which was submitted by the Soviet delegation in Geneva. It opens the way to a fair accord. But the United States obviously does not want such an accord. Its conduct at the negotiations and outside the negotiations provides evidence of that.¹³⁵

Soon after the United States submitted its draft START treaty, the Soviet Union offered a "new" set of proposals, probably intended to offset the impression of greater American flexibility. It retained the 1,800 overall ceiling on "strategic nuclear delivery vehicles" (SNDV) while dividing this into three categories for long-range, cruise missile-equipped bombers, submarine- and land-based ballistic missiles, and land-based MIRVed missiles. The limits were to be achieved in phases by 1990. Table 1.2 gives specific elements of the Soviet proposal along with the corresponding SALT II limits.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ "Stuck Fast," Pravda, 17 July 1983, p. 5, translated and reprinted in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 18 July 1983, p. AA2.

¹³⁶ For details on the Soviet July 1983 proposal, see: Michael Getler, "Soviets Advance Revised Proposal On Arms Limits," Washington Post, 13 July 1983; Hedrick Smith, "Soviet Broadens Arms Proposals; Hope Seen By U.S.," New York Times, 14 July 1983; Charles W. Corddry, "Soviet Arms Offer Said to Keep Rockets," Baltimore Sun, 14 July 1983; William Beecher, "Arms Talks: A Hint of Flexibility," Boston Globe, 14 July 1983; and, William Beecher, "Soviet Hinting Thaw?" Boston Globe, 15 July 1983.

Table 1.2

SOVIET JULY 1983 START PROPOSAL AND SALT II LIMITS

<u>July 1983 Proposal</u>		<u>SALT II</u>
Total SNDV	=	1,800
MIRVed ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers	=	1,200
MIRVed ICBMs and SLBMs	=	1,080
MIRVed ICBMs	=	680

The comparison with SALT II serves at least two purposes here. First, it demonstrates the explicit Soviet objective of retaining the basic SALT II framework. Second, setting forth a START proposal so close to the SALT II limits may have been a calculated Soviet move to play on the differences over SALT II within the Reagan administration, chronicled in Strobe Talbott's book Deadly Gambits.¹³⁷

The phased reductions envisioned by the Soviet proposal would have occurred over a seven year period and involved three phases, as given in Table 1.3 below.¹³⁸ The

¹³⁷ Strobe Talbott, Deadly Gambits: The Reagan administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control, (New York: Knopf, 1984).

¹³⁸ Beecher, "Arms Talks: A Hint of Flexibility," Boston Globe, 14 July 1983.

difference of 600 SNDVs between the 1,800 overall limit and 1,200 MIRVed subceiling would presumably involve bombers without ALCMs and single warhead ballistic missiles.

Other aspects of the July 1983 Soviet proposal included the withdrawal of a proposed ban on ALCMs with ranges over 600 km (reported earlier), and the introduction of a new proposal permitting 120 cruise missile-equipped bombers. It also dropped the earlier Soviet proposal for banning or strictly limiting additional missile submarines of the U.S. Ohio (Trident) class and equivalent Soviet submarines, and the proposed total ban on deploying Trident II missiles then being developed by the United States.

Table 1.3

SOVIET PROPOSED START REDUCTION TIMETABLE

	<u>1985</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1990</u>
SNDV	= 2,250	2,000	1,800
MIRVed missiles	= 1,320	1,250	1,200
MIRVed ICBMs	= 820	750	680

The Soviet proposal continued to make no mention of warhead limits, although the U.S. side had been emphasizing

placing limits on the numbers of warheads for some time, rather than simply limits on the number of launchers -- a major U.S. criticism of SALT I and II.

There are three important points to be made regarding the July 1983 Soviet proposals. They concern the substance, the timing, and the U.S. assessment of the Soviet proposals. First, they represented absolutely no significant change from the original Soviet START proposals which called for an overall ceiling of 1,800 on SNDVs. While the U.S. exhibited considerable movement in its proposed launcher and warhead limits, the latest Soviet proposals represented nothing more than an elaboration on what sublimits would be included within the overall 1,800 number, and the timetable for achieving these reductions. In fact, they may have represented a preplanned refinement -- held back when the initial Soviet proposals were presented -- to be put forth at a later date in the negotiations when the image of Soviet flexibility and sincerity needed bolstering.

Second, it does not appear that these proposals were put forth immediately at the beginning of Round Four, but were only presented after the U.S. had submitted its draft treaty. This suggests that perhaps the Soviets held out to see how much flexibility they could get from the U.S., or that their proposals were offered in response to a perception that American concessions had scored points for the U.S. in the global public relations contest.

Third, whatever signs of flexibility or compromise existed in the Soviet July 1983 proposals were attributed by U.S. analysts to three factors. They shed light on how the U.S. perceives Soviet interests in strategic arms reductions. The three factors credited with providing incentives for serious Soviet bargaining in START were: (1) congressional support for the strategic modernization program outlined by the Scowcroft Commission; (2) the flexibility represented in the U.S. administration's June 1983 START proposals; and, (3) the continuing -- albeit fragile -- congressional support for modernization of the U.S. strategic triad.¹³⁹

As Round Four recessed Soviet ambassador Viktor M. Karpov told members of the press that there had been no progress during that round and that the United States was "marking time." The Soviet delegation was apparently determined to dispel any impression that the new American draft treaty, incorporating provisions compatible with the Scowcroft Commission report and yielding to key Soviet criticisms, had put pressure on the Soviets to make similar concessions.

On 1 September 1983, just days before the scheduled beginning of a new round of the INF negotiations, news of

¹³⁹ Charles W. Corddry, "Administration Fears an MX Loss Just As Geneva Talks Show Hope," Baltimore Sun, 20 July 1983.

the Korean airliner shot down by the Soviets appeared in headlines.¹⁴⁰ While this incident increased U.S.-Soviet tensions considerably, it had little or no impact on Washington's desire for continuing earnest arms reduction negotiations. If there was any discernible fall-out for the START or INF talks, it was in a hardening of the Soviet position. In any case, the first set of negotiations to resume after this tragic event were the INF talks.

The INF negotiations resumed a month earlier than the START negotiations (on 6 Sept. as opposed to 5 October for START), and it was in the INF forum that the two sides signaled their arms control reactions to the crisis. Both in Washington and in Geneva at the INF talks, the U.S. strongly indicated that it would not hold current arms negotiations hostage to the political fall-out of the Korean airliner tragedy.¹⁴¹ "Any thought of cancelling the resumption of INF or START was promptly dismissed."¹⁴² The

¹⁴⁰ "Korean Jet Reported Downed in U.S.S.R." Baltimore Sun, 1 Sept. 1983; and, Michael Dobbs, "Moscow Admits Shooting Down Korean Plane," Washington Post, 7 Sept. 1983.

¹⁴¹ Henry Trewhitt, "Nitze Is Told to Be Flexible In Arms Talks," Baltimore Sun, 4 Sept. 1983; Robert C. Toth, "Geneva Talks Hinge on 162 Missiles: Jetliner Issue Likely to Fade as U.S., Soviet Focus on Arms," Los Angeles Times, 6 Sept. 1983; Bruce Vandervort, "U.S.: Geneva Arms Talks to Proceed Despite Plane Incident," Washington Post, 6 Sept. 1983; Bernard Gwertzman, "U.S. Said to Weigh Arms Concessions," New York Times, 21 Sept. 1983; and Vinny Kuntz, "Airline Disaster Won't Hinder Arms Talks, Federal Official Says," Tallahassee Democrat, 21 Sept. 1983.

¹⁴² Talbott, Deadly Gambits, p. 193.

possibility of cancelling the non-nuclear MBFR talks was also rejected. With regard to the START negotiations, President Reagan said:

[W]e can not, we must not, give up our effort to reduce the arsenals of destructive weapons threatening the world.

Ambassador Nitze has returned to Geneva to resume the negotiations on intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe. Equally, we will continue to press for arms reductions in the Start talks that resume in October.

We are more determined than ever to reduce and if possible eliminate the threat hanging over mankind. We know it will be hard to make a nation that rules its own people through force to cease using force against the rest of the world, but we must try.¹⁴³

This line was reiterated by the U.S. Secretary of State, George P. Shultz, at an East-West foreign ministers conference following the Korean airliner massacre. While castigating the Soviets for callous human rights abuses, the Secretary of State urged a "serious dialogue" on arms control issues:¹⁴⁴

Despite the repeated conciliatory signals from the United States, the Kremlin, with convoluted logic, used the furor over the incident to blame the United States for exploiting the crisis to block progress in START, and some

¹⁴³ "Transcript of President Reagan's Address on Downing of Korean Airliner," New York Times, 6 Sept. 1983.

¹⁴⁴ Bernard Gwertzman, "Shultz Assails the Russians But Asks 'Serious Dialogue,'" New York Times, 10 Sept. 1983.

U.S. officials even detected signs that the Soviet negotiating position hardened in the weeks following the shooting down of flight KAL-007.¹⁴⁵

IV. START'S FINAL ROUND: FALL 1983 CHANGES IN U.S. AND SOVIET POSITIONS

As Round Five -- START's final round (5 October 1983 to 7 December 1983) -- approached, key American senators urged the United States to adopt a new START position that could not have helped but further reinforce the Soviet perception of a divided and unsettled negotiating partner. The senators sought to forge a bipartisan approach to arms control and proposed the following elements for inclusion in a future U.S. START position:¹⁴⁶

- (1) an immediate ceiling on the number of ballistic missile warheads;
- (2) an immediate ceiling on the overall destructive capacity of the strategic forces of both sides at existing levels;

¹⁴⁵ Antero Pietila, "TASS Ties Crash to Arms Talks: U.S. Using Controversy As Obstacle, It Says," Baltimore Sun, 6 Sept. 1983; and Leslie H. Gelb, "Arms Talks: Shift by U.S.," New York Times, 5 October 1983.

¹⁴⁶ Press release from the office of Senator Sam Nunn, 12 Sept 1983; Letter to General Brent Scowcroft on the letterhead of the United States Senate, Committee on Armed Services, dated 9 Sept 1983, and signed by Senators Sam Nunn, Bill Cohen, and Chuck Percy. See also, Martin Tolchin, "Three Senators Propose New Nuclear Arms Reduction Plan," New York Times, 12 Sept. 1983; Vernon A. Guidry, Jr., "3 Senators Say U.S. Should Seek 'Double Build-Down' Arms Pact," Baltimore Sun, 12 Sept. 1983; and, "Senators Urge 2-Stage Nuclear Arms Cutback," Los Angeles Times, 12 Sept. 1983.

- (3) a guaranteed annual build-down in the number of ballistic missile warheads;
- (4) creation of incentives favoring stabilizing systems (e.g. small, single-warhead ICBMs) and penalizing destabilizing systems (e.g. MIRVed ICBMs);
- (5) establishment of a second guaranteed annual build-down in the overall destructive capacity of the strategic forces, including missiles and bombers, of both sides;
- (6) avoidance of provisions that would prohibit or discourage survivability; and,
- (7) an immediate agreement with the USSR on a build-down as a framework and precursor for a detailed START treaty.

But even this attempt at congressional-sponsored bipartisan arms control produced division, and presented yet another debate, rather than any incipient consensus.¹⁴⁷

In a public White House ceremony on 4 October 1983 President Reagan gave his START negotiators new instructions incorporating the 'build-down' concept.¹⁴⁸ In connection

¹⁴⁷ Walter Pincus, "'Build-Down' Plan Divides Arms Experts," Washington Post, 2 October 1983.

¹⁴⁸ On the announcement of new U.S. START proposals incorporating 'build-down' see, Robert C. Toth, "President Will Make New Proposal on Strategic Arms," Los Angeles Times, 4 October 1983; Walter Pincus, "U.S. to Ask Arms Talks Task Force," Washington Post, 4 October 1983; Steven R. Weisman, "Reagan Promotes New Arms Offers," New York Times, 5 October 1983; Lou Cannon, "Reagan Sends Team Back to Arms Talks With New Proposals," Washington Post, 5 October 1983; Benjamin Taylor, "Reagan Proposes a 'Build-Down' of Long-Range Nuclear Missiles," Boston Globe, 5 October 1983; Gerald F. Seib, "Reagan Offers Arms-Reduction Proposal For Destruction of Old Nuclear Warheads," Wall Street Journal, 5 October 1983; and, Leslie H. Gelb, "Arms Talks: Shift by U.S."

with this new stance, the U.S. proposed establishment of a special working group to promote an agreement using the 'build-down' concept. Again, while much of the new U.S. proposal can be attributed to domestic pressures, there were also important concessions to Soviet demands. For example, the United States expressed a willingness to consider trade-offs in areas of U.S. advantage -- namely bombers and cruise missiles -- for trade-offs in areas of Soviet advantage -- large land-based ICBMs. As the President said:

On another front, and in our effort, again, to be absolutely as flexible as possible, we will be willing to explore ways to further limit the size and capability of air-launched cruise missile forces, in exchange for reciprocal Soviet flexibility on items of concern to us. We seek limits on the destructive capability of missiles and recognize that the Soviet Union would seek limits on bombers in return. There will have to be trade-offs and the United States is prepared to make them, so long as they result in a more stable balance of forces.¹⁴⁹

Specific elements of the new U.S. START position, as reported at the time, included three build-down ratios for different systems as follows:¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ "'The Soviet Government Must Start Negotiating in Good Faith'" (excerpts of President Reagan's 4 October 1983 speech), Washington Post, 5 October 1983.

¹⁵⁰ Details of this new U.S. START proposal can be found in: Gelb, "Arms Talks: Shift by U.S.;" and Taylor, "Reagan Proposes a 'Build- Down'."; "White House Urges Unity on START," Washington Times, 6 October 1983; and, Robert C. Toth, "Reagan Offers 'Build-Down' of A-Weapons," Los Angeles Times, 15 October 1983.

- two MIRVed ICBM warheads to be withdrawn for every new one deployed (2:1)
- three SLBM warheads to be withdrawn for every two deployed (3:2)
- one warhead on a single-warhead ICBM to be withdrawn for every new single-warhead ICBM deployed (1:1)

Other features included a special 'build-down' working group; annual reductions by 'building down' until reaching 5000 warheads, or a minimum 5 percent reduction of original total per year until reaching the overall 5000 warhead limit; a concurrent build-down of bombers; and, negotiation of additional air-launched cruise missile limits.

The United States stressed the conciliatory nature of these proposals. In his speech announcing that new positions would be forwarded at the talks, President Reagan noted that "the Soviet Union has yet to give any significant response" to previous U.S. initiatives in START. He continued by listing U.S. concessions to Soviet concerns and pointing out that "the Soviet Union has yet to give any significant response."

Throughout the negotiating process, it is the United States who has had to push, pull, probe and prod in the effort to achieve any progress. The heartfelt desire shared by people everywhere for a historic agreement dramatically reducing nuclear weapons could, and indeed, will be achieved, provided one condition changes: the Soviet government must start negotiating in good faith.

Let me emphasize that the United States has gone the extra mile. We have removed the dividing line between the two phases of our original proposal. Everything is on the table. We are still most concerned about limits on the fast-flying, most dangerous systems. But we are also prepared to negotiate limits on bomber and air-launched cruise missile limits below SALT II levels. We have shown great flexibility in dealing with the destructive capability of ballistic missiles, including their throw weight. We have also relaxed our limits on the number of ballistic missiles. We have gone a very long way to address Soviet concerns. But the Soviets have yet to take their first meaningful step to address ours.¹⁵¹

The Soviet government news agency TASS responded by accusing the President of "deceiving public opinion" regarding U.S. flexibility, and charging that U.S. proposals were intended "to continue the race along the channels of improving the quality of missiles and bombers." The Soviet rejoinder stressed that there had been no basic change in the American position, and tediously reiterated the charge that U.S. proposals were a mask to cover American intentions of achieving nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. The concept of 'build-down' was criticized: "What is meant by this is that the sides will get the right to deploy new, upgraded systems of mass annihilation as they phase out old, less effective ones." The Soviet commentary also repeated the claim that Reagan's START position was intended to protect and leave intact the President's strategic

151 "'The Soviet Government Must Start Negotiating in Good Faith'" (excerpts of President Reagan's 4 October 1983 speech), Washington Post, 5 October 1983.

modernization program, including the MX missile, B-1 bomber and Trident II missile.¹⁵²

A few weeks later, the Soviet Communist Party newspaper Pravda commented on the new U.S. initiative, essentially repeating the themes found in the earlier TASS commentary. Pravda particularly stressed the notion that the new U.S. proposals were "false and fraudulent." It also referred to them as "gimmickry," saying:

At hand is a fresh propaganda invention designed to mislead people by ostentatious flexibility, to conceal the inconsistency and unacceptability of the American stand. One should not be of such a low opinion, reaching the point of vicious mockery, about the ability of people to find out the real sense of these maneuvers and fraudulent steps.¹⁵³

The Pravda commentary also stressed other themes that by then had become unvaryingly typical of Soviet reactions to new U.S. initiatives in the START negotiations. Among these were:

- (1) the U.S. proposals violated the principle of "equality and equal security;"
- (2) the U.S. proposals sought sharp cuts in the most important Soviet ICBMs while also seeking to protect new American nuclear weapon programs;

¹⁵² TASS commentary reported in Dusko Doder, "Soviets: Arms Offer 'Nothing but Words,'" Washington Post, 6 October 1983.

¹⁵³ See 23 October 1983 Pravda article reported in "Reagan's Latest Arms Proposal Just 'Gimmickry,' Pravda Says," Chicago Tribune, 24 October 1983.

- (3) the United States was seeking to use START as a means of gaining nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union; and,
- (4) the latest U.S. proposals show no evidence of real or substantive flexibility or movement from the original U.S. position.¹⁵⁴

Curiously, some Western diplomats reportedly saw encouraging signs in the fact that the Pravda article failed to mention U.S. suggestions that a separate working group be set up to discuss implementing an agreement on 'build-down.'¹⁵⁵

On arriving in Geneva for the commencement of Round Five, chief Soviet negotiator Victor Karpov kept up the Soviet attitude that progress depended completely upon the United States, saying "all depends on Mr. Rowny. If he shows real flexibility, then everything will be OK, there will be results and progress."¹⁵⁶ Nothing could better illustrate the Soviet definition of "progress" mutual accession to its own proposals than these comments as START's final round began.

A week after Round Five opened, on Wednesday 12 October 1983, the Soviets offered to set up a joint working

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ "Reagan's Latest Arms Proposal Just 'Gimmickry,' Pravda Says," Chicago Tribune, 24 October 1983.

¹⁵⁶ See, "START Sessions Reopen in Geneva," Washington Times, 6 October 1983; and, Don Cook, "U.S., Soviets Begin New Talks on Arms," Los Angeles Times, 7 October 1983.

group to discuss possible draft treaty language. The move was heralded as signally progress in START. However, at about the same time, the Soviet Union declined the earlier American offers to set up joint working groups on confidence-building measures and implementing the 'build-down' approach, despite earlier hopeful sentiments on the part of Western diplomats.¹⁵⁷

Some U.S. analysts continued to believe that the Soviets might be positioning themselves for a limited agreement the following year if they determined that President Reagan's chances for reelection appeared good, and the fact that the Soviets were "asking serious questions to try to flesh out the new Administration proposals" was interpreted as supporting this theory.¹⁵⁸

During Round Five the Soviets offered some refinements on their START position, but these amounted to little more than elaborations on their previous positions. The Soviet START proposals at the end of Round Five included the following:¹⁵⁹

- an interim freeze on strategic nuclear weapons while negotiations were underway;

¹⁵⁷ William Beecher, "Move May Signal START Progress," Boston Globe, 18 October 1983.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ National Academy of Sciences, Nuclear Arms Control: Background and Issues, p. 67.

- an aggregate limit of 1,800 on ICBM launchers, SLBM launchers, and heavy bombers (representing a 20 percent reduction from the SALT II limit of 2,250);
- a sublimit of 1,200 on MIRVed ICBMs, SLBMs, and bombers equipped with cruise missiles;
- a sublimit of 1,080 on MIRVed ICBM and SLBM launchers;
- a sublimit of 680 land-based ICBM launchers;
- unspecified equal limits on missile warheads and bomber weapons;
- modernization constraints on the size and types of new SLBM and ICBM missiles, including SALT II-type limits on MIRV fractionation; and,
- a ban on ground- and sea-launched cruise missiles with ranges greater than 600 km.

The Soviet Union had dropped earlier proposals for banning Trident II, long-range air-launched cruise missiles, limiting the U.S. deployment of Trident submarines from four to six, and a call to reduce the number of missile tubes on future Trident submarines from 24 to 16.¹⁶⁰ As noted, these positions did not differ appreciably from the July 1983 Soviet START proposals.

Note that much of the closing Soviet position closely paralleled that of specific SALT I and II provisions, and appeared designed to place severe restrictions on the advertised U.S. strategic modernization program.

The Soviet Union apparently spent Round Five exploring the U.S. position rather than presenting changes

160 Ibid.

in its own, and the round was later characterized as the "least productive."¹⁶¹

V. THE SOVIET WALKOUT

On Wednesday, 23 November 1983, the Soviets broke off negotiations on INF weapons in Europe.¹⁶² A major statement attributed to Andropov was published in Pravda on Friday, 25 November 1983.¹⁶³ Andropov stated that "the United States had no desire to reach a mutually acceptable accord on nuclear armaments in Europe and has done everything at the talks in Geneva and outside them to prevent such an accord."¹⁶⁴ Then he reviewed a series of decisions adopted by the Soviet leadership:

Having carefully weighed all the aspects of the situation which has been created, the Soviet leadership has adopted the following decisions:

First: Since the United States by its actions has wrecked the possibility of achieving a mutually acceptable accord at the talks on questions of limiting nuclear arms in Europe and since their continuation in

¹⁶¹ Jay Ross, "Latest START Negotiations Said to Be Least Productive," Washington Post, 10 December 1983.

¹⁶² John Vinocur, "Soviet Breaks Off Parley in Geneva on Nuclear Arms," New York Times, 24 November 1983; and, Michael Getler and William Drozdiak, "Soviet 'Discontinue' Talks On Medium-Range Missiles," Washington Post, 24 November 1983.

¹⁶³ "Statement by Yu.V. Andropov, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium," Pravda, 25 November 1983, p. 1, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 25 November 1983, pp. AA1-AA3.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. AA2.

these conditions would only be a cover for actions by the United States and a number of other NATO countries aimed at undermining European and international security, the Soviet Union considers it impossible to participate further in these talks.

Second: The commitments unilaterally adopted by the Soviet Union with the objective of creating more favorable conditions for achieving success at the talks are abrogated. The moratorium on the deployment of Soviet medium-range nuclear systems in the European part of the USSR is thereby abrogated.

Third: By agreement with the governments of the GDR and the CSSR the preparatory work begun some time ago, as was announced, for the siting of enhanced-range operational-tactical missiles on the territory of those countries will be accelerated.¹⁶⁵

Fourth: Since by siding its missiles in Europe the United States is increasing the nuclear threat to the Soviet Union, corresponding Soviet means will be deployed in ocean regions and seas taking this circumstance into account. In terms of their characteristics these means of ours will be equal to the threat created for us and our allies by the U.S. missiles being sited in Europe.

Of course, other measures aimed at safeguarding the security of the USSR and the other socialist community countries will also be taken.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵ A Soviet broadcast by Colonel Edward Grigoriyev on 29 October 1983 made the following comment: "Since preparations have been stepped up in Western Europe for the deployment of new American nuclear missiles to be trained on the Soviet Union and their Warsaw Treaty countries, preparations are underway in the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia for the deployment of tactical missiles. This has been announced by the Soviet Defense Ministry and the Governments of the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia." See Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 29 October 1983, p. AA5.

¹⁶⁶ "Statement by Yu.V. Andropov."

Andropov asserted Soviet willingness to resume negotiations, but only if NATO withdrew its newly deployed missiles and restored the pre-existing strategic balance:

If the United States and the other NATO countries display a readiness to return to the situation which existed prior to the commencement of the siding of U.S. medium-range missiles in Europe, the Soviet Union too will be ready to do likewise. And then the proposals which we submitted earlier regarding questions of limiting and reducing nuclear arms in Europe would come into force again. In this event, that is, provided the previous situation is reestablished, the USSR's unilateral pledges in this sphere would also come back into force.¹⁶⁷

It might be noted that there was no similar major statement by the Soviet leadership in the aftermath of the START negotiations.

Observers in the West immediately sought to put the best face on the collapse. Paul Nitze commented "We are hopeful the Soviet side will come to the conclusion it is in their interest, as well as in our interest and in the world's interest, that the negotiations resume." Others saw an encouraging sign in the fact that the Soviets termed the walk-out a "discontinuance" rather than a complete abandonment.¹⁶⁸ For others, the normal resumption of START negotiations on Tuesday, 29 November 1983, seemed to indicate that the Soviets would insulate START from their

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. AA3.

¹⁶⁸ Daniel Southerland, "A Walkout, But Not a Breakdown, In East-West Talks," Christian Science Monitor, 25 November 1983.

hardened INF position, although Soviet negotiator Karpov reiterated his theme that the United States had blocked progress: "There is no progress up to now. As I have explained many times, the position of the American side is not for an agreement."¹⁶⁹

An important theme of this chapter has been the repeated incidence of Western exaggeration of Soviet interests in a strategic arms reduction agreement. The following allegorical commentary gives some indication that this was the case just after the Soviets walked out of the INF talks, but came back the next week to the START negotiations:

Like the dog that didn't bark in the Sherlock Holmes story, the fact that the Soviets have continued business as usual in the strategic missile talks in Geneva, after walking out of the medium-range talks there, is significant.

It fairly shouts with the message that the Politburo wants to continue exploring the possibility of a serious arms-control deal regardless of the political necessity of baring its teeth after the parliaments of West Germany, Britain and Italy ignored warnings and voted to go ahead with deployment of American Pershing 2 and cruise missiles.¹⁷⁰

On 8 December 1983 the Soviets concluded Round Five of START while refusing to set a date for resumption of the

¹⁶⁹ "U.S., Soviets Resume Talks on Long-Range Missiles," Los Angeles Times, 30 November 1983.

¹⁷⁰ William Beecher, "The Other Arms Talks," Boston Globe, 2 December 1983.

negotiations.¹⁷¹ The Soviet and American delegations issued statements at the conclusion of the talks. The chief Soviet negotiator made the following statement:

Today the delegations of the Soviet Union and the United States met in a plenary session ending the fifth round of the Start negotiations.

In view of the deployment of new U.S. missiles in Europe, which has already begun, changes in the global strategic situation make it necessary for the Soviet side to review all problems under discussion at the Start negotiations.

Therefore no date for a resumption of the negotiations has been fixed.¹⁷²

The chief U.S. negotiator responded with the following comment on the Soviet position:

We regret that the U.S.S.R. has chosen to set a resumption date for the next round. We cannot agree with Soviet assertions that developments outside the scope of these negotiations require the Soviet Union to withhold agreement on a resumption date for the sixth round of Start.

The United States, for its part, is fully prepared to continue the regular pattern of the Start negotiations. We have proposed to resume Round VI in early February, and we hope that the U.S.S.R. will soon

¹⁷¹ Frank J. Prial, "Soviet Won't Set A Date to Resume Strategic Talks," New York Times, 9 December 1983; William Drozdiak, "Soviets Halt Strategic Arms Talks," Washington Post, 9 December 1983; and Don Cook, "Soviets Leave Strategic Arms Talks in Limbo," Los Angeles Times, 9 December 1983.

¹⁷² "Statements on Geneva Talks," New York Times, 9 December 1983.

agree on a date for resuming these negotiations, which are in the interest of both our nations and of the entire world.¹⁷³

The U.S. had made substantially more concessions than Soviets throughout the course of the START negotiations, and the U.S. had come significantly closer to the original Soviet position.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

ADDENDUM: SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR VERIFICATION AS
INDICATIONS OF INTEREST IN A START AGREEMENT

In conversations with U.S. Senator Larry Pressler, Viktor Karpov, the designated head of the Soviet delegation to START, expressed a willingness to discuss on-site inspections. Other elements of the Soviet opening position were evident. For example, Karpov noted that Moscow was against any kind of linkage. He also gave the obligatory image of pessimism regarding the intentions of the U.S. administration. Another Soviet official reportedly joked with Karpov in Pressler's presence, saying "You've just got yourself a ten year job." The Soviets indicated that they did not consider it very realistic to expect a treaty before the end of Reagan's term, substantiating the notion that the Soviets went into START pessimistic about the prospects of achieving actual reductions, desiring more to merely maintain the SALT II arms control framework, and to wait out the end of the Reagan administration's term in office.

The Soviets may have calculated, in their characteristically long-term planning style, that at the end of Reagan's term in office one of two things would happen. Either Reagan would bow to domestic pressures for arms control agreements, or a more accommodating Democratic administration would be elected. By late 1982, soon after START began, the Nuclear Freeze Movement was well under way

in the United States, possibly leading the Soviets to believe that Reagan could not long resist these kinds of public pressure.

Certainly the Reagan administration's handling of the Freeze issue did nothing to bring such a perspective into question, involving as it did the muffling of "rhetoric" on such issues as fighting and winning a nuclear war, nuclear warning shots in NATO strategy, and the functions and desirability of civil defense.

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko, in discussions in Bonn, West Germany, hinted during Round Three of START "that agreements might be verified by more direct means than spy satellite."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ Hal Piper, "Soviet's Hints for Negotiation on All Arms Blur Geneva Focus," Baltimore Sun, 20 Jan. 1983.

CHAPTER TWO

SOVIET THREAT PERCEPTIONS AND NEGOTIATING INCENTIVES

I. Threat Perceptions and the Correlation of Forces IN SOVIET ARMS CONTROL CALCULATIONS

Threat perceptions are a critical element of Soviet net assessment for foreign and military policy in general, and for arms control policy in particular. They are the basis for Soviet defense resource allocation decisions as well as the basis of Soviet foreign and military policy calculations. In an arms control context, threat perceptions include Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces and of U.S. bargaining leverage. At a relatively abstract level, threat perceptions are analyzed by the Soviets in terms of the "correlation of forces". At a more specific and less abstract level, threat perceptions involve Soviet views and evaluations of U.S. bargaining leverage.

This chapter will examine Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces, showing that the Soviets perceived

U.S. strategic nuclear force modernization plans as sufficient incentive to engage in a process of negotiation in order to maximize Western incentives for restraint without an agreement that would place undo limits or reductions on Soviet nuclear weapons.

In conjunction with this discussion, the following conceptual and substantive issues will also be examined: (1) do imminent threats increase Soviet interest in arms control, particularly arms reductions? (2) If so, what kinds of threats, and in what ways do they increase Soviet interests in what kinds of arms control? (3) How do Soviet perceptions of threat impact on Soviet foreign and military policy? (4) What role do Soviet perceptions of the "correlation of forces" play in Soviet arms control interests and objectives?

A more substantive issue this chapter will seek to explore is the nature and character of Soviet threat assessment during START. Representative Soviet perceptions of the U.S. political and military threat will also be reviewed.

The Reagan administration's strategic policy and modernization program may have provided sufficient incentives for the Soviets to resume negotiations on strategic arms, but did the lack of sufficient U.S. bargaining leverage constitute a source of Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement? The

chapter following this will deal more specifically with Soviet perceptions of the U.S. bargaining position. It will develop the theme that although U.S. strategic nuclear modernization programs elicited Soviet support for negotiating strategic arms reductions, the U.S. lacked sufficient deployed forces to interest the Soviets in actually agreeing to a strategic arms reduction accord.

Historical perspectives on Soviet interests in arms control shed interesting light on Soviet motivations. Soviet interests in arms control and disarmament have at times increased when a hostile external threat or deteriorating international situation threatened Soviet interests.¹ As noted, Soviet perceptions of the international situation are conceived in terms of the concept of "correlation of forces" explained below.

This was true in the 1920s when the Soviet Union sensed a lingering international hostility to the Bolshevik regime. At that time Lenin reversed his earlier opposition to disarmament (which he had opposed for fear that it would disarm the peasants he relied upon to overthrow existing

¹ Historical Soviet perceptions of the international situation can be found in Myron Rush, ed., The International Situation and Soviet Foreign Policy, (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1970). See also, Robert B. Mahoney, Jr. and Richard P. Clayberg, "Images and Threats: Soviet Perceptions of International Crises, 1946-1975," in Pat McGowan and Charles W. Kegley, Jr., eds., Threats, Weapons, and Foreign Policy, (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1980), pp. 55-81.

governments) and soon became a vocal champion of disarmament efforts.

A similar shift in Soviet policy occurred in the 1930s. Faced with a growing imperialist threat in the East from Japan, and the ascendance of Hitler and Nazi expansionism in the West, the Soviet Union adopted a policy of "collective security" which included cooperation in international disarmament efforts.

The Soviet Union has never been willing to rely exclusively on disarmament for its security. It has always taken steps to provide for its security independently of arms control arrangements with potential adversaries. Also, the espousal of arms control has been only one of several diplomatic instruments the Soviet Union adopted when confronted with external threats to its survival. It is also important to appreciate that Soviet interests in disarmament were limited, even at these times. It proposed disarmament measures and urged Western participation in various disarmament schemes, but always in conjunction with unilateral initiatives to improve its security position relative to its potential adversaries.

The Soviets perceived the correlation of forces during the 1981-1983 period as being in their favor (as the following analysis will show), but with the possibility of either (1) shifting back to U.S. favor in the near future (principally as a result of NATO INF deployments), or (2)

becoming more costly to maintain in their favor. During this period of time, the Soviet Union perceived multiple sources of danger to the favorable correlation of forces they had achieved during the so-called 'SALT decade'. This chapter will suggest that this conclusion provided sufficient incentives for the Soviets to propose and negotiate strategic arms reductions initiatives. But did they provide sufficient incentives for the Soviets to sign an agreement on strategic arms reductions?

The primary focus of Soviet concerns with possible adverse trends in the correlation of forces during this time related to NATO INF modernization. This chapter will therefore treat Soviet threat perceptions of NATO INF modernization in some detail, especially in terms of their impact on Soviet interests in START.

It is useful to recall that a distinction was made in Chapter Two regarding the degree and scope of Soviet interests in strategic arms reductions between Soviet interests in proposing and negotiating versus actually signing arms control agreements, and that this dissertation examines the thesis that the Soviets were relatively uninterested in a strategic arms reduction agreement during the START negotiations of 1982 and 1983.

The prospect of a reversal in the "favorable" trend of the 1970s in the correlation of forces -- due to U.S. strategic nuclear force initiatives in the early 1980s --

provided strong incentives for the Soviets to negotiate strategic arms reductions. On the other hand, the lack of U.S. bargaining leverage counteracted those incentives with strong disincentives for reaching an agreement that might have entailed substantial costs to the Soviets in terms of diminishing strategic nuclear power accumulated over more than a decade at enormous expense.

Before proceeding, a few methodological caveats are in order. Much interpretation of Soviet perceptions is necessarily inferential. The evidential base for inferring Soviet calculations regarding arms control consists primarily of Soviet writings published in the West. These Soviet writings are often nauseatingly propagandistic and easily dismissed as dogmatic, self-serving and polemical on face value. Yet the Soviets may also be communicating in a way they consider quite clear and understandable. After all, there are important points Soviet writers want to convey to both internal and external audiences. The difficulty lies in distinguishing substance from propaganda. One Western analysts framed the problem this way:

An evaluation of Soviet material must interpret each Soviet statement in light of the different purposes and multiple audiences at which it is thought to be directed. For example, the analyst must judge whether the Soviets calculate a greater benefit from understating or over-estimating their real threat perceptions in their ever evolving official negotiating postures. The analyst must also draw significance from

contradictory statements in the Soviet press with the realization that, even in the realm of threat perceptions, the Soviet process of consensus building allows a measure of debate to spill over into public view. At the same time, the complementarity of seemingly contradictory statements about foreign military threats can frequently be revealed by a thorough examination of those tenets of Soviet military doctrine to which their authors attach them.²

Soviet criticisms of U.S. START proposals may be more than simple propaganda. They may have some substance that serves as evidence of actual Soviet threat perceptions. But there are certain caveats to bear in mind. Soviet statements are sometimes calculated to suppress appreciation of fundamental differences between East and West -- especially in terms of military and foreign policy, and to stress areas of alleged common interests. This is especially true in an arms control context. Common interests are defined in self-serving ways by Soviet spokesmen. Identification of problems (both for the Soviets and for the West) by these spokesmen frequently appear to be drawn from Western analyses. It is uncharacteristic of Soviet authors to discuss or divulge internal problems. Again, this often seems calculated to promote ostensible common interests in combating common problems, especially in an arms control context where the Soviets would like to exaggerate Western expectations of grounds for agreement.

² William V. Garner, Soviet Threat Perceptions of NATO's Eurostrategic Missiles, (Paris: The Atlantic Institute for International Affairs, November 1983), p. 9.

Soviet writings are permeated by a siege mentality. They are preoccupied with casting the United States as the militarist enemy and the Soviet Union as the indefatigable champion of world peace and tranquility. But Soviet writings also reveal insight and appreciation for U.S. domestic political considerations (e.g. a fragile defense spending consensus) with important implications for Soviet perceptions of the U.S. bargaining position.³

To better appreciate Soviet threat perceptions, and their impact on Soviet arms control interests, it is important to understand what the Soviets feel they have to defend.

The Soviets often speak in terms of "the gains of the October Revolution." In a very real sense it is these "gains" that constitute the essence of Soviet security interests. Specifically, these "gains" refer to the Bolshevik seizure of state power in 1917, and can now be interpreted as control of the assets of the Russian/Soviet nation-state by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). The Soviet state serves as the corporal basis for the CPSU's role as "vanguard" of the socialist revolution. The Soviets interpret both internal and external threats in

³ See for example the evaluation given by Soviet officials reported in Howard Simons and Dusko Doder, "Soviet Officials Pessimistic About Improving Relations With U.S." Washington Post, 26 Oct. 1981. This subject is treated at greater length in the next chapter.

terms of their danger to CPSU control of the Soviet state. CPSU control of the Soviet state would be meaningless if that state ceased to exist, or if that state's power were relatively diminished. The interests, then, of the Soviet state as the power base of world socialism are conceptually indistinguishable from the framework of interests provided by Marxist-Leninist ideology. Thus, to the extent that arms control impacts on Soviet national power, Soviet interests in arms control will always have ideological undertones.

For present purposes, there are basically two types of threats to Soviet interests which are potentially amenable to arms control solutions -- political and military.

Political threats may include increased international tensions. This is often evidenced in terms of Soviet discussions of the inevitability of war and is inextricably connected with Soviet conceptions of "stability" and what causes "instability." It also includes fears of "capitalist encirclement." These types of threats have been the hallmark of Soviet alarmist propaganda since the earliest days of the Soviet Union.⁴

Military threats include concerns with new weapons as well as the fear of new technologies, especially those

⁴ See John Erickson, "Threat Identification and Strategic Appraisal by the Soviet Union, 1930-1941," in Ernest R. May, ed., Knowing One's Enemies, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 375-423.

technologies that may unfavorably impact on the "correlation of forces." For example, the Soviets have expressed apprehensions regarding the U.S. military-technological challenges in strategic defenses.

It should be noted that the Soviets do not always respond to these threats, political or military, with arms control initiatives. One task of this chapter will be to identify those types of threats which promote Soviet incentives for proposing and negotiating, but more especially agreeing to strategic arms reductions.

The primary military and political threat to the Soviet state in the post-war era has been the United States. In terms of its capability to impose damage on Soviet interests, the United States has been the "only meaningful enemy."⁵ Although it can be argued that China has posed a greater ideological threat to Soviet interests at certain periods in the post-war era, only the United States has consistently possessed the means and, in the Soviet view, the intention of opposing the U.S.S.R.

Furthermore, American possession of nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles are the main military instruments of danger to the U.S.S.R. The danger posed by nuclear weapons and intercontinental delivery means is augmented, in the Soviet view, by the U.S. policy of

⁵ P.H. Vigor, The Soviet View of Disarmament, (New York: St. Martin's, 1986), p. 56.

encircling the Soviet Union with foreign military bases and alliances, partly because these can be used as staging areas for nuclear weapon delivery vehicles.⁶

It is not surprising then to find that Soviet proposals for General and Complete Disarmament (GCD) since 1945 have nearly always contained three basic elements:

- a ban on nuclear weapons;
- destruction of delivery systems for nuclear weapons; and,
- abandonment of all foreign military bases and withdrawal of all foreign troops.⁷

III. SOVIET PERCEPTIONS OF THE CORRELATION OF FORCES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 1980S

As mentioned previously, the correlation of forces is the conceptual framework for Soviet net assessment processes. According to Soviet sources, the correlation of forces interacts with arms control in two ways. First, the Soviets view arms control as a zero-sum interaction. Whatever their opponent loses is their gain and vice versa. The correlation of forces determines the outcome of arms negotiations. If the East-West correlation of forces is favorable to the Soviets, the outcome of any East-West negotiation will be in their favor. Second, an arms agreement can in turn codify a "favorable" correlation of

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 55-56.

forces while also promoting beneficial trends in the correlation of forces.

The correlation of forces at the time SALT II was signed (1979) was characterized by Soviet spokesmen as "rough parity." Parity in nuclear forces is declared by the Soviets to be a necessary basis for any accord on nuclear arms. The Soviets perceive many advantages to a condition of U.S.-Soviet strategic parity and equality. SALT I and II were possible because parity had been achieved through the Soviet Union's efforts to match the U.S. in strategic nuclear forces. In turn, compliance with SALT I and II would insure continued parity by placing ceilings on the aggregate numbers of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDVs) permitted to both sides, and by restricting strategic force modernization to defined parameters. The Soviet Union regarded the establishment of parity and the signing of SALT I and II as among the greatest achievements of the 1970s, and, as will be shown, the Reagan administration posed multiple serious challenges to these cherished accomplishments of Soviet diplomacy and military policy.

The Soviet concept of the correlation of forces differs substantially from the traditional Western concept of balance of power mainly in that it encompasses a much broader number of factors for comparative purposes. These include economic, military, political, and ideological

factors. The following passage best serves to illustrate the many factors that go into Soviet calculations of the correlation of forces within each of the principal categories:

Many criteria exist with which to assess the correlation of forces. In economics, usually we compare the gross national product on a per capita basis, labor productivity, dynamics of economic growth, level of industrial output, particularly in the leading sectors, labor technology, resources and manpower skills, number of specialists, and level of industrial output, particularly in the leading sectors, labor technology, resources and manpower skills, number of specialists, and level of development of theoretical and applied science. In the military aspect, comparisons are being made of the quantity and quality of arms, fire power of the armed forces, combat and moral qualities of the soldiers, training of the command personnel, forms of organization of the troops and their experience in combat, nature of the military doctrine, and methods followed in strategic, operative, and tactical thinking. In terms of politics, we take into consideration the breadth of the social base of the governmental system, its method of organization, constitutional procedures governing relations between the government and the legislative organs, possibility to make operative decisions, and extent and nature of population support of domestic and foreign policy. Finally, if it is a question of assessing the strength of one or another international movement, we take into consideration its quantitative composition, influence among the masses, position in the political life of the individual countries, principles and norms governing relations among its constituent units, and the extent of their unity. All these comparisons enable us to determine with greater or lesser accuracy the correlation of forces at any given sector or time, and may be used for purposes of short-term forecasts . . . The trend itself is uncontroversial: the overall ratio of forces in the

world is steadfastly changing in favor of socialism.⁸
(emphasis added)

There are three important aspects of Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces. The first regards the last line of the above citation -- the notion that the global correlation of forces is irreversibly changing in favor of socialism. According to Marxist-Leninist ideology this is historically predetermined. The second point is that, in the Soviet view, the global correlation of forces began shifting in favor of the Soviet's in the 1970s. In 1973 Brezhnev noted:

We are deeply convinced that the current changeabout from cold war to détente, from military confrontation to a more solid security and to peaceful cooperation is the main tendency in present-day international relations. How has this become possible? The main factor, we are certain, is the general change in the correlation of world forces -- a change that is against the exponent of cold war and the building up of arms and those who fancy diverse military ventures, a change in favor of the forces of peace and progress.⁹

The Soviets believed that the shift in the correlation of forces was greatly aided by the signing of SALT I and II, and that the change that occurred in the

⁸ G. Shakhnazarov, "On the Problems of Correlation of Forces in the World," Kommunist, No. 3 (Feb. 1974), cited in Raymond S. Sleeper, ed., A Lexicon of Marxist-Leninist Semantics, (Alexandria, VA: Western Goals, 1983), p. 69.

⁹ L.I. Brezhnev, "Speech at the World Congress of Peace Forces," Moscow, 26 Oct. 1973, in Our Course: Peace and Socialism, A Collection of Speeches, (Moscow, 1974), Part Four, p. 67, cited in Ibid.

correlations of forces during the 1970s has forced the U.S.:¹⁰

- (1) to recognize the impossibility of winning a nuclear war;
- (2) to recognize the folly of pursuing local wars (specifically Vietnam);
- (3) to resort to strategic arms limitation talks;
- (4) to modify its strategic doctrine from one of "strategic superiority" to a less provocative objective of "sufficiency"; and,
- (5) to recognize the Soviet Union as an equal, including legitimizing Soviet boundaries in Europe.

Détente was made possible, according to Soviet sources, because the correlation of forces had shifted in favor of socialism. As early as 1976 Soviet spokesmen were declaring that:

Decisive significance attaches to the strengthening of the might of world socialism, primarily of the Soviet Union, which has been able, in a brief historical period, to liquidate the U.S. nuclear monopoly and create a military potential which does not lag behind the American potential. This very fact has exercised and still exercises a deterrent influence on the aggressive circles of capitalism and prompts them to give up gambling on world thermonuclear war in the struggle against socialism and other revolutionary

¹⁰ See John Lenczowski, Soviet Perceptions of U.S. Foreign Policy, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), pp. 162-63. See also, Jonathan Samuel Lockwood, The Soviet View of U.S. Strategic Doctrine, (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1983), pp. 7, 123-170.

forces and to look for new forms of relations with the socialist countries.¹¹

According to these Soviet conceptions of the correlation of force, the West does not grant the Soviets important benefits of its own accord:

Imperialism accepted détente, not because it wished to but because it was forced to. It was compelled to accept détente because the correlation of forces in the world arena changed in favor of socialism.¹²

The third point to be noted regarding Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces concerns the Soviet understanding of a "favorable" correlation of forces. A "favorable" correlation of forces means two things to the Soviets. First, it means that the Soviet Union has superiority over the U.S., NATO, and China -- primarily in terms of military power (and nuclear weapons are the principal index of military power).¹³ Second, it means that

¹¹ D. Tomashevskiy, "How the West is Reacting to Détente," International Affairs, (Russian language edition), no. 10 (1976): 38-47, quoted in Seymour Weiss, "SALT in Soviet Eyes," in John F. Lehman and Seymour Weiss, Beyond the SALT II Failure, (New York: Praeger, 1981), p. 41. (pp. 37-58.)

¹² 1979 statement attributed to Yuri V. Andropov during his tenure as head of the KGB, cited in Albert L. Weeks and William C. Bodie, eds., War and Peace: Soviet Russia Speaks, (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1983), p. 6.

¹³ For the assertion that a "favorable" correlation of forces means Soviet superiority, see Julian Lider, "The Correlation of World Forces: The Soviet Concept," Journal of Peace Research, 17, 2 (1980), p. 167fn.

the overall trend in world politics is evolving in a direction that promotes Moscow's long-term aims and ambitions. In a chapter titled "The Main Factor of World Politics" from a 1980 book published in the Soviet Union, author Nikolai Lebedev leaves no uncertainty regarding what the "main factor" is:

The change in the correlation of forces in favour of socialism is an objective and natural law of world development. It is realised through the actions of states, classes, and parties, and through a very complex interaction of diverse social forces, which influence the general situation in the world, and of shaping tendencies and counter-tendencies in world development. At the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s it was precisely this new correlation of forces which created conditions for a fundamental restructuring of international relations on the basis of the assertion of the principles of peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems.¹⁴

In 1981 during a review of Soviet foreign policy throughout the 1970s and into the early 1980s, Andrei Gromyko characterized the late 1960s and early 1970s as a period "when favorable opportunities for restructuring the entire postwar system of international relations on a peaceful and democratic basis emerged as a result of the change in the correlation of forces in the world in favor of

¹⁴ Nikolai Lebedev, The USSR in World Politics, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1980), p. 141.

socialism."¹⁵ Gromyko notes that this favorable change in the correlation of forces allowed the Soviet Union to advance a "Peace Program" at the 24th CPSU Congress.

The role of the correlation of forces in Soviet arms control calculations can be inferred from the role with which the Soviets credit SALT in affecting the correlation of forces in the 1970s. Soviet assessments of the correlation of forces may help determine when to seek arms agreements or when to seek only negotiations, and if negotiations are called for they may help determine what types of arms agreements to seek.

Arms control proposals, negotiations, and agreements must contribute to a "favorable" correlation of forces in order for the Soviets to be interested in them. Furthermore, Soviet compliance with arms control agreements will be assured only if such compliance contributes in some way to maintaining a "favorable" correlation of forces (if only to encourage compliance on the part of the other side to an agreement).

Peter Vigor has conducted an extensive survey of Soviet perspectives on disarmament up to 1980 in an effort which may properly be considered a chronological precursor to the present undertaking. Taking care to note the

¹⁵ "Leninist Foreign Policy in the Contemporary World," reprinted in Soviet Press: Selected Translations, 81, 4 (April 1981), p. 120.

explicit and official long-standing historical interest of the Soviet state in disarmament, he interprets such interest to mean Soviet determination to slow down and eventually halt the arms race. But while the conventional Western wisdom is that this can only be accomplished through arms control mechanisms, Vigor concludes that the Soviets have a different view:

[H]aving agreed that the first step along the road to any form of disarmament, in the proper sense of that word, is to slow down, and eventually halt, the arms race, the next thing is to discover by what means the latter can be accomplished. In the Soviet view, there is only one method by which this can be done; and this is by getting the world "correlation of forces" (sootnoshenie sil) to tilt in favour of socialism.

The Soviet concept of the "correlation of forces" lies at the root of all their thinking on international affairs, whether in the political, the economic or the military sphere, or indeed in any other for that matter.¹⁶

Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces at the beginning of the 1980s reveal the substance of Soviet incentives for negotiating strategic arms reduction issues with the United States. They also confirm many of the aspects of the concept of the correlation of forces discussed above. For example, the following statement from a 1983 article makes it clear that attempts to best the

¹⁶ Vigor, The Soviet View of Disarmament, pp. 11-12.

Soviet Union through accelerated arms competition will not work because of the correlation of forces:

Present-day U.S. leaders make no secret of the fact that they are using the arms race to try to exhaust the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. These are futile schemes! The United States and its allies failed to achieve that goal at our most difficult time -- after World War II. That is even more unrealistic nowadays. The correlation of forces in the world makes the policy a pure anachronism under present day conditions.¹⁷

By the time SALT II was signed (1979), the correlation of strategic nuclear forces was profoundly characterized by "parity" in the Soviet view. Brezhnev noted:

As regards the global correlations of forces between the biggest participating powers in these two military-political groupings, that is, the Soviet Union and the United States, here, as is officially acknowledged by both sides, a rough parity, that is a balance of strategic forces, has taken shape is maintained. It is precisely this parity that lies at the basis of the Soviet-U.S. agreement on strategic offensive arms limitation, concluded in 1972, and also at the basis of the agreement now being drawn up [i.e. SALT II].
(emphasis added).¹⁸

¹⁷ Robert Ivanov, "International Review: Disarmament, Words and Deeds," Sovetskaya Rossiya, 14 July 1983, p. 1, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 19 July 1983, p. A12.

¹⁸ "From Interview Given to Vorwärts," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 213. (pp. 211-217.)

"Parity" in the Soviet view is a concept that requires some qualification. It is not "balance" as that term is understood in the West. "Parity" is a condition that favors the advancement of Soviet strategic and political objectives. The Soviet Union enjoys substantial superiority in nearly every indice of strategic nuclear power.¹⁹ The SALT I agreement accorded the Soviet Union a one-third superiority in all categories of weapons covered by the treaty ("deployed launchers" of land- and sea-based inter-continental missiles), yet was described by the Soviets as codifying "strategic parity."

There are some categories of weapons the Soviet Union has refused to subject to arms reduction efforts, and for which the United States has never received formal rights to deploy in U.S.-Soviet arms control agreements, such as "heavy" ICBMs which are necessary for a prompt hard-target kill capability. The Soviet Union has rationalized terming the strategic balance "parity" despite its monopoly in this category of weapons by allowing the United States to retain a superiority in bombers as an "offset." It is clear that the Soviet Union considers "parity" a condition where it is

¹⁹ On the U.S.-Soviet strategic balance, see Quentin Crommelin, Jr., and David S. Sullivan, Soviet Military Supremacy, (Los Angeles: Crommelin and Sullivan, 1985), etc.

allowed to establish and modernize a prompt hard-target kill capability but the United States is not.²⁰

"Equal security" is a Soviet concept meant to rationalize including American "Forward Based Systems" in the category of strategic weapons. Gerard Smith notes the following explanation from the SALT I negotiations:

Agreements on the basis of equal security . . . had to deal with threats as perceived by each side. All nuclear delivery systems which could be used to hit targets in the other country should be covered in SALT, regardless of whether their owners called them strategic or tactical.²¹

Western scholars have also recognized that "equal security" in Soviet usage is "a code word for unequal strategic numbers."²² According to this Soviet notion, the USSR must have military forces equal to all actual and potential threats to its security. A further refinement on

²⁰ This point is developed in Robert J. Einhorn, Negotiating From Strength: Leverage In U.S.-Soviet Arms Control Negotiations, (New York: Praeger, 1985), pp. 42-55.

²¹ Gerard Smith, Doubletalk: The Story of the First Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1980), p. 91.

²² Nathaniel Davis, "'Equality and Equal Security' in Soviet Foreign Policy," Essays on Strategy and Diplomacy, No. 5 (Claremont, CA: Keck Center for International Strategic Studies, January 1986), pp. 4, 7.

this concept suggests that the security requirements of the Soviet Union are greater than those of the United States.²³

U.S.-Soviet agreements of 1972-74 provided a "sound foundation" for the "positive development" of Soviet-American relations, and created "objective possibilities for further developing equal and mutually advantageous co-operation in various spheres for the good of both countries and of universal peace."²⁴

According to Soviet officials, American compliance with Soviet conceptions of "equal security" is a "realistic" policy:

The most important thing is that the American administration should take a fully realistic stand and proceed from the principle of equality and equal security.²⁵

On this issue Brezhnev has promised the following:

²³ Daniel M. Proektor, "Problems of the Soviet Union's Military Policy," Co-existence, 19, 1 (April 1982), cited in Davis, pp. 5-6.

²⁴ "From Speech at the 16th Congress of Trade Unions of the USSR," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 156. (pp. 154-162.)

²⁵ "From Address for French and Soviet Television," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 168. Emphasis added. (pp. 167-170.)

In a word, if the government of the United States adheres to the principles of equal security and renunciation of attempts to gain unilateral advantages, as set down in our agreements, the Soviet Union will always be a conscientious and active partner in such an important cause as the limitation and reduction of strategic arms.²⁶

The Soviets see many advantages accruing from a condition of East-West parity. For example, they declare that "parity is a reliable guarantee of peace," and they have often enshrined the principle in speeches, agreements, and communiqus. Andropov has stated:

The military-strategic parity attained [by the Soviet Union] has deprived the United States of a possibility to blackmail us with the nuclear threat. This parity is a reliable guarantee of peace, and we will do everything to preserve it.²⁷

The Soviets probably see at least four substantive advantages to be gained from a condition of "parity," described above as a condition favoring the advancement of Soviet strategic and political objectives, including the deployment of a unilateral prompt hard-target kill capability. The following have been identified by Western

²⁶ "From Speech to the Electors in the Bauman District of Moscow, June 14, 1974," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 71. (pp. 67-73.)

²⁷ "Yu.V. Andropov Answer to a Pravda Correspondent's Questions," Pravda, 27 March 1983, p. 1, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 28 March 1983, p. A1.

analysts as among those advantages of superpower strategic "parity" accruing to the Soviets:²⁸

- (1) it "increases the military efficacy of military forces below the strategic nuclear threshold;"
- (2) it provides a conducive international environment for the expansion of Soviet influence;
- (3) it contributes to gaining U.S. recognition of the Soviet Union as an equal power; and,
- (4) it promotes exploitable tensions between the U.S. and its NATO allies.

According to a Soviet source late in the START negotiations:

Luckily for mankind the period of U.S. military superiority was relatively short-lived. As early as the end of the fifties the correlation of forces in the world arena began to change toward a gradual establishment of a strategic equilibrium. This process took place in conditions of a constant whipping up of the nuclear arms race by the United States which tried stubbornly, though in vain, to maintain its advantage. In the sixties and seventies the strategic equilibrium became a reality, was recognized by both sides, and was embodied in the SALT II Treaty, signed in 1979.²⁹

This Soviet author goes on to elaborate on what is meant by "strategic equilibrium" and why it is considered an essential condition of international relations. His first

²⁸ Robbin F. Laird, and Dale R. Herspring, The Soviet Union and Strategic Arms, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1984), pp. 6-7.

²⁹ M. Lvov, "Anatomy of the Nuclear Threat," Pravda, 21 Nov. 1983, p. 6, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 28 Nov. 1983, p. AA8.

point is that it provides a condition of mutual assured destruction:

First, strategic equilibrium with a high level of nuclear potential on both sides means either side has the guaranteed possibility, should it become the victim of a nuclear aggression, to retain sufficient means to carry out a retaliatory strike capable of destroying the aggressor. . . . in the military sense the concept of "mutual deterrence" has a certain substance since it reflects both sides' understanding of the fact that in conditions of an equilibrium of forces in a nuclear war there can be no winner.³⁰

Secondly, strategic equilibrium creates conditions for strategic arms reductions:

It hints, so to speak, at the possibility -- given goodwill on both sides -- of gradually lowering the level of nuclear confrontation while constantly maintaining the equilibrium -- that is, strictly adhering to the principle of equality and identical security.³¹

The author further states on this point:

If the SALT II treaty had been ratified and the talks on a complete and general nuclear test ban brought to a successful conclusion , a favorable starting point for real progress toward increasingly low levels of nuclear confrontation would have been created.³²

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid., p. AA9.

³² Ibid.

Third, strategic equilibrium is, according to this Soviet viewpoint, an important prerequisite for "lessening political confrontation and deepening the process of relaxation of tensions." Additionally:

In the conditions of strategic equilibrium, the more distinct the prospects of the levels of military confrontation being lowered, the more promising is the potential for expanding and consolidating political détente.³³

Note that the Soviets rarely speak of the advantages of strategic parity to themselves alone, but always refer to these advantages as benefiting the entire international community.

Soviet officials have stated that a "sober analysis" of the correlation of forces led the U.S. to realize the necessity of arms accords with the Soviet Union. Brezhnev, speaking of the 1976 U.S. Presidential elections, said:

[W]hoever comes to power in Washington after the elections, it seems that the United States will have to consider the real correlation of forces in the world, which prompted American ruling circles, by a sober analysis of the situation, in recent years to commence a search for accords with the socialist world.³⁴

Strategic nuclear parity was created by Soviet efforts to catch up with the United States. Appreciation that parity had become the new norm in U.S.-Soviet strategic

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Pravda, 26 Oct. 1976, quoted in Lehman and Weiss, Beyond the SALT II Failure, p. 41.

relations imposed a new "reality" on American political decision-making:

The acknowledgement of Soviet-American parity in the strategic arms sphere played a special part in the Western ruling circles' appreciation of the new international realities and the appropriate correction of their political course. . . . The change in political strategy toward relaxation of tension revolves not around random considerations based on expediency, but around long-term factors stemming from the strengthening of socialism's positions in the world.³⁵

Leonid Brezhnev made this connection between parity and U.S.-Soviet arms control agreements:

As regards the global correlations of forces between the biggest participating powers in these two military-political groupings, that is, the Soviet Union and the United States, here, as is officially acknowledged by both sides, a rough parity, that is a balance of strategic forces, has taken shape and is maintained. It is precisely this parity that lies at the basis of the Soviet-U.S. agreement on strategic offensive arms limitation, concluded in 1972, and also at the basis of the agreement now being drawn up [i.e. SALT II].³⁶ (emphasis added)

One Soviet article published in Pravda gave five reasons for Soviet support of SALT II, again strongly

³⁵ Tomashevskiy, "How the West is Reacting to Détente," International Affairs, (Russian language edition), no. 10 (1976): 38-47, quoted in Lehman and Weiss, Beyond the SALT II Failure p. 41, (see also p. 47).

³⁶ "From Interview Given to Vorwarts," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 213. (pp. 211-217.)

implying that it should be the basis for further arms limitation agreements:³⁷

- 1) the treaty represented a "balance of USSR and U.S. interests;"
- 2) it was compatible with the principle of "equality and equal security;"
- 3) it was supported by President Carter and the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff at the time ("many eminent American politicians and scientists are now speaking of the U.S. refusal to ratify it as a big mistake");
- 4) it "erected definite obstacles in the way of the further quantitative growth and qualitative improvement of a number of the most destructive strategic arms," as well as "initiated their reduction;" and,
- 5) "It laid a good foundation for further measures to limit and reduce strategic arms and was designed to help improve Soviet-American relations and to develop and strengthen political and military détente."

Interestingly, the Basic Principles Agreement and the agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War seem the most important outcomes of early U.S.-Soviet SALT negotiations for the Soviets, and not the Interim Offensive Agreement, as in the view of most Americans.³⁸ Authoritative Soviet speeches often refer to them first, and to the other

³⁷ A. Nikonov, "Disarmament Is the Demand of the Times: Acute and Urgent Problem," Pravda, 13 Aug. 1982, p. 4, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 17 Aug. 1982, p. AA1. (pp. AA1-AA3.)

³⁸ See Nathaniel Davis, "'Equality and Equal Security' in Soviet Foreign Policy," Essays on Strategy and Diplomacy, No. 5 (Claremont, CA: Keck Center for International Strategic Studies, January 1986), pp. 2-3.

agreements signed at the same time only secondly.³⁹ For example, note the following passage from a speech by Leonid Brezhnev:

As a result of the negotiations with U.S. President Nixon in Moscow and Washington, and later of the meetings with President Ford in Vladivostok and Helsinki, important and fundamental mutual understanding has been reached between the leaders of the Soviet Union and the United States on the necessity of developing peaceful, equal relations between the two countries. This is reflected in a whole system of Soviet-U.S. treaties, agreements, and other documents.

Unquestionably the most important of these are the Basic Principles of Mutual Relations Between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War, and the series of strategic-arms-limitation treaties and agreements. What is the main significance of these documents? In all, they have laid a solid political and legal foundation for greater mutually beneficial co-operation between the USSR and USA in line with the principles of peaceful coexistence. To a certain extent they have lessened the danger of nuclear war. Precisely in this we see the main result of the development of Soviet-U.S. relations in the past five years.⁴⁰ (emphasis in original)

The implication is that military-strategic stability derives (in the Soviet view), not from any particular aspect of the strategic weapons balance, but from political stability, or the "relaxation of international tensions."

³⁹ See the various speeches by Leonid Brezhnev, in Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), pp. 23, 56-57, 85.

⁴⁰ "From Report to the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 107. (pp. 103-114.)

To summarize, Soviet substantive interests in disarmament (as opposed to propaganda interests) are conditioned by Soviet calculations of the correlation of forces and Soviet perceptions of parity and strategic equality.

III. SOVIET PERCEPTIONS OF REAGAN'S STRATEGIC MODERNIZATION PROGRAM

The Reagan administration posed, in the Soviet view, multiple dangers to Moscow's foreign and military policy agenda. According to Soviet sources, President Reagan's defense program represented an explicit and deep commitment to the following major objectives:

- (1) an unrestricted buildup of military preparations;
- (2) "whipping up the nuclear arms race" in order to break the existing rough military parity between the USSR and the United States; and,
- (3) ensuring United States' nuclear superiority.

About eighteen months into Reagan's first term, an article written by Soviet Minister of Defense Dimitriy Ustinov and published by Pravda, stressed that there was a "sharp deterioration in the international situation," and that "aggressive imperialist circles with the United States at the head continue to whip up the arms race, kindle dangerous crises and armed conflict in various regions of the world, irresponsibly threatening the use of nuclear

weapons." He then gave the following as a characterization of United States military objectives:⁴¹

- (1) "The United States should be power No. 1 militarily as regards all indices. At the same time superiority is simply understood as the attaining of an ability to deal a blow at the Soviet Union, at those targets and at a time when Washington finds it expedient in the hope that the counterstrike at the United States would be less powerful than under different conditions.
- (2) "In the name of attaining superiority the programs for the build-up of strategic offensive forces, nuclear and conventional armaments, for the beefing up of U.S. and NATO military might as a whole have been compiled. Americans demand that their partners raise military spendings already not by three percent but by no less than 4.5 percent a year.
- (3) "The United States is drawing other countries in various regions of the world into the orbit of its military preparations, and is trying to set up new military blocs. The construction of new and the expansion of existing military bases around the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community continue.
- (4) "The development of weapons systems to conduct military operations in outer space and from outer space is proceeding at a growing pace. The plans are being implemented for the development and deployment of missile and laser weapons in outer space, including with the use of the space shuttle system.
- (5) "Political and economic moves are closely linked with military measures. Propaganda and special measures against socialist states are being adjusted to fit the new doctrine. Having no scruples, even prejudicing the interests of its allies and itself, the United States is trying to orchestrate a trade, credit, and scientific-technological war against the socialist community."

⁴¹ Pravda article by Dimitriy Ustinov, reported by TASS in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 12 July 1982, pp. AA1-AA2.

The most prominent theme in this and other Soviet commentaries at the time was that the Reagan administration was seeking strategic superiority, and was doing so in order to impose its will on other nations as a fundamental aspect of its foreign and military policy. One Soviet military spokesman made the following comments in an interview with Western reporters:

Security is our highest interest. We think it is dangerous if the United States is superior in some types of arms. The Americans could exploit superiority for political purposes, and from that, it would not be a long way to conflict. We require balance at all stages of reductions, even at the lowest levels.⁴²

The Soviets were not so much concerned with U.S. attempts to achieve nuclear superiority as they were with the threat that U.S. defense programs would upset a balance that favored Soviet strategic objectives, which the Soviets had expended considerable resources to achieve. Although the 1980 Republican party platform certainly gave the appearance of an official endorsement of superiority as a national priority, by 1982 the Reagan administration had quite clearly renounced any intention of pursuing nuclear superiority as the price for appeasing the nuclear freeze movement in the United States.⁴³

⁴² Maj. Gen. Viktor Starodubov in Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert Asks Nuclear Balance," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982.

⁴³ Note the furor over revelations in the American press concerning the "Fiscal Year 1984-1988 Defense

The Soviets pointed to specific weapons programs as evidence that the Reagan administration was seeking nuclear superiority. These included cruise missiles, but more importantly, NATO INF modernization plans, discussed more fully below. Other Soviet commentaries also charged that the Reagan administration was "pressing forward with material preparations for war," and that the United States was responsible for a "sharp deterioration" in the international situation due primarily to an intensification of the American ideological war against the Soviet state, and U.S. pursuit of military superiority. These commentaries also doubted U.S. sincerity in the INF and START negotiations, saying that the U.S. "may have decided to enter the talks in an effort to deflect antinuclear movements in Europe and the United States."⁴⁴

"Guidance" and the subsequent retractions by Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger: "Weinberger Disavows Idea Atomic War Can Be Won," Baltimore Sun, 4 June 1982; Michael Getler, "Pentagon Acts to Clarify Position on Nuclear War," Washington Post, 4 June 1982; "Transcript of an Interview With the Secretary of Defense (Weinberger), June 20, 1982 (Extract)," in U.S. Department of State, American Foreign Policy: Current Documents, 1982, (Washington, D.C., 1985), pp. 97-98; and Jack Nelson, "Weinberger Expands on Nuclear Plans," Los Angeles Times, 26 August 1982. See also the testimony and insertions given in U.S. Senate, "U.S. Strategic Doctrine," Hearings, Committee on Foreign Relations, 97th Congress, 2nd Session, 14 Dec. 1982.

⁴⁴ See, for example, Dimitri Ustinov in 30 June 1982 TASS commentary reported in Dusko Doder, "Soviets Mark Arms Talks by Accusing U.S. of Preparing for War." Washington Post, 1 July 1982.

Soviet threat perceptions may have actually reflected Soviet aims and ambitions in terms of Soviet preparations for war, the Soviet-instigated intensification of an ideological struggle, Soviet pursuit (and actual achievement) of strategic nuclear superiority, and Soviet exploitation of the Western peace movement.

A dominant theme in Soviet writings from the START period was that Reagan's military program was comprehensive, and that it tied together elements of foreign, economic, and trade policy.⁴⁵ Throughout the 1970s the Soviet Union was consistently critical of certain "circles" in the United States who were opposed to détente and which were "striving to spur on the arms race" while attempting to place the responsibility for this arms race on the Soviet Union.⁴⁶ Soviet leaders also criticized these "circles" for pretending the Cold War was still in progress, or for wishing to bring it back. Conditions had changed, the Soviets asserted, and détente had been established. Either this new condition was being ignored, or "certain circles in the West" were seeking to undermine or destroy it. In 1976 Brezhnev stated:

45 For an example, see the Ustinov article cited footnote 41.

46 See for example, "From Speech to the Electors in the Bauman District of Moscow, June 14, 1974," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 70.

They behave as if nothing has happened in recent years, as if nothing has changed and the world continues to be in a state of 'cold war'. They instigate one noisy campaign after another about an allegedly increasing 'military threat' from the USSR, demand more and more military appropriations, and are intensifying the arms race.⁴⁷

With the inauguration of Ronald Reagan in 1981 these very "circles" were now at the pinnacle of power in the United States, occupying the White House.

Soviet criticisms of the Reagan administration echoed many, if not all, of the criticisms hurled at the administration by its own domestic American critics. The most central theme in Soviet perceptions of Reagan's defense agenda was that the United States was now determined to achieve strategic nuclear superiority over the USSR. The Reagan administration was seen by the Soviets as determined to destroy the basis of the existing condition of strategic "parity" (and thus the basis of any equitable arms agreement) through its strategic programs and defense policy (which the Soviets characterized as a shift toward nuclear war-fighting). The Soviets also claimed that Reagan was

⁴⁷ This quote is from "Replies to Questions by Joseph Kingsbury-Smith, Hearst Corporation," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente, and Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 146.

seeking nuclear superiority through deploying INF systems in Europe.⁴⁸

Soviet commentaries early in the Reagan administration's tenure depicted expectations of the worst in the U.S.-Soviet military arena. The administration was accused repeatedly of seeking military superiority with a "comprehensive plan" that envisioned modernization of all three legs of the Triad, with the MX missile, Trident SLBM, and B-1 bomber as its centerpieces.

With its very first steps the Reagan administration took a course directed toward undermining détente, confrontation with the Soviet Union and pursuit of military superiority. Both the President himself and his closest aides and associates have repeatedly stated this publicly. Nor do they conceal their objective in this connection: the United States must be the most powerful country in the world and to achieve this they are 'prepared to pay any price'.⁴⁹

The Soviets noted Reagan's plans for increasing funding for the Rapid Deployment Force, conventional forces, intercontinental nuclear forces, and theater nuclear forces. Specific weapon programs were often singled out for particular criticism. These included the Pershing II, cruise missiles, the MX missile, B-1, and D-5 -- virtually

⁴⁸ See, for example, Col.-Gen. N. Chervov, "Who Is Seeking Missile Superiority?" Soviet Military Review, No. 12 (Dec. 1983): 46-47.

⁴⁹ Maj. Gen. R. Simonyan, "The Pentagon's Nuclear Ambitions," Agitator Armii i Flota, No. 1 (Jan. 1982): 30-32, translated in USSR Report: Military Affairs, JPRS No. 1695 (4 Aug. 1982): 1-3.

the entire spectrum of Reagan's strategic nuclear modernization efforts.

The Soviets also criticized plans to modernize American strategic nuclear command and control systems, and charged that the United States was developing "fundamentally new types of strategic weapons" -- probably referring to new generation ICBMs and SLBMs.⁵⁰

The Soviets also accused Reagan of trying to make the idea of nuclear war more acceptable to the American people, ostensibly to promote public support for his nuclear modernization efforts.⁵¹

The Soviets at this time declared that a dangerous shift had occurred in U.S. strategic policy, but had been declaring such dangerous developments at each major junction in the evolution of American nuclear deterrence policy.⁵² What made Reagan's shift particularly antithetical to Soviet interests was that it came at the height of Soviet success in creating a "favorable" correlation of forces (i.e. favorable to Soviet interests). Also, NATO's INF modernization plans posed a greater possibility of materializing than had any U.S. or NATO nuclear force

50 Ibid.

51 Laird and Herspring, pp. 105-106.

52 See, for example, the analysis in Jonathan Samuel Lockwood, The Soviet View of U.S. Strategic Doctrine, (New Brunswick: Transaction Books), 1983.

modernization effort since the neutron bomb fiasco of the Carter administration. This kind of threat to the correlation of forces -- one involving an incipient Western weapon modernization effort -- was, in the Soviet calculation, the kind most easily thwarted by arms control.

Soviet Minister of Defense, Dimitri Ustinov, listed the principal threats to international peace and stability from the Soviet viewpoint in late 1982. Predictably, the United States was behind each one. Nothing new or particularly noteworthy was presented in Ustinov's presentation, but his list does provide some insight, however, into Soviet perceptions of threats to the correlation of forces as the START negotiations got under way. His comments show Soviet concern with a wide range of American military activities, not just nuclear modernization programs:⁵³

- (1) heavy U.S. military spending increases, with "the lion's share of these colossal resources going to the development of strategic offensive forces and nuclear weapons of all kinds."
- (2) President Reagan's decision to deploy 100 MX ICBMs;
- (3) U.S. modernization of "Eurostrategic" systems, including Pershing II missiles, cruise missiles, military space systems, and increases in the NATO arsenal of chemical weapons;
- (4) improvements in American conventional force posture, including increases in U.S. naval forces, efficiency

⁵³ Dimitriy Ustinov in TASS International Service, 6 Dec. 1982, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 6 Dec. 1982, p. AA1.

of conventional munitions, and perfection of the network of military bases and other facilities "aimed against the USSR and the whole socialist community;"

- (5) formulation of a U.S. military doctrine of "direct confrontation" aimed at achieving military supremacy over the Soviet Union and the establishment of "U.S. world overlordship";⁵⁴
- (6) large-scale exercises of U.S. and NATO land and naval forces (which are "in effect rehearsals for starting and waging nuclear war against the USSR and the Warsaw Treaty"); and,
- (7) Reagan's new "crusade" against communism, which has the aim of achieving U.S. world domination.⁵⁵

Additionally, the Soviets also deeply resented the feeling that the Reagan administration had tacitly withdrawn American recognition of the Soviet Union as an equal, and they charged that the U.S. was out for nothing less than "world domination," as the following quote by Ustinov makes clear:

Despite the present objective realities, and in the final analysis and despite all good sense, Washington is as before doing everything it can in order to outdo the Soviet Union in the military sense and at the same time to give themselves full scope for winning world domination.

⁵⁴ This passage continues: "The doctrines include a broad range of aggressive concepts -- from a massive first nuclear strike to the waging of 'limited' and 'protracted' nuclear wars. But from the directives made public in the United States, they amount to 'the destruction of socialism as a sociopolitical system'."

⁵⁵ "Its purpose is to politically isolate and economically weaken the USSR and its friends."

This aim is served by taking to an unprecedented level the intensity of military preparations by imperialism.⁵⁶

Finally, the Soviets warned that Reagan's strategic modernization program would destroy the basis for arms talks, saying that conclusion of a strategic arms accord was "the key problem" in international relations, and would determine the climate of world politics throughout the 1980s.⁵⁷ The Soviets consistently made such claims at each major initiative in Western defense policy since substantive East-West negotiations began in the early 1960s. These claims were made in conjunction with accusations that the Reagan administration was trying to deal with the Soviet Union from "positions of strength."⁵⁸ The extent to which specific U.S. systems constituted bargaining leverage in Soviet eyes will be discussed in Chapter Five. Here it is only necessary to establish Soviet views of these systems as posing potential threats to the correlation of forces during the START negotiations.

To provide the reader with some idea regarding how the Soviet Union portrayed their perceptions of selected

⁵⁶ Ustinov, cited in footnote 41.

⁵⁷ "Soviet Says U.S. Moves Threaten Arms Accord," New York Times, 29 June 1982.

⁵⁸ See, for example, the introduction to USSR Ministry of Defense, Whence the Threat to Peace, (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1982), pp. 5-6.

Reagan administration strategic modernization efforts, Soviet views of the U.S. cruise missile program, the MX missile development, and the Small ICBM (SICBM) are briefly reviewed in the next several paragraphs.

One principal source of threat to the Soviets' cherished condition of "parity" in the early 1980s was U.S. cruise missile programs.⁵⁹ For example, note the following passage:

Washington's measures to achieve a military advantage in strategic arms pose tremendous danger for the cause of peace. One of the ways in which this plan is being carried out is the large-scale production of strategic cruise missiles of all types -- land-, sea- and air-based.⁶⁰

Soviet Chief of Staff Marshal Ogarkov reportedly stated that:

[Deployment of American cruise missiles] not only would disrupt the approximate balance of medium-range nuclear systems that has been created in Europe but would also lead to a sharp qualitative change in the political-military situation since it would create the threat of a surprise suppression of our strategic nuclear forces.⁶¹

In an interview as spokesman for the Soviet military, Maj. Gen. Viktor Starodubov stressed that U.S. intentions to

⁵⁹ Raymond L. Garthoff, "Soviet Perspectives," Richard K. Betts, ed., Cruise Missiles: Technology, Strategy, Politics, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1981), pp. 339-358.

⁶⁰ N. Fyodorov, "Cruise Missiles and the Arms Race," Pravda, 7 Jan. 1982, p. 4, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 34, no. 1 (3 Feb. 1982), p. 10.

⁶¹ Quoted in Drew Middleton, "Cruise Missile a Major Issue in Arms Talks," New York Times, 6 Dec. 1981.

start a "cruise missile race" would undermine the value of any strategic arms reduction agreement that might be signed between the two sides.⁶²

According to Soviet commentaries, the U.S. intended to "make up for the reduction in the number of warheads in ballistic missiles through a massive deployment of long-range cruise missiles with nuclear charges." Soviet writings declared that the U.S. intended to place 4,000 cruise missiles on heavy bombers, thus perpetrating not only a "considerable increase" in the number of "nuclear charges" on carriers of strategic weapons, but a determined drive to achieve clear superiority in air-launched cruise missiles.⁶³ The Soviets also claimed that the Pentagon was planning to deploy "12,000 cruise missiles of various basing modes," of which 8,000 were to be air-launched.⁶⁴ The number 8,000 is apparently based on a Soviet calculation that the U.S. would deploy 400 B-1 and stealth bombers carrying 20 air-launched cruise missiles each.⁶⁵

⁶² Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert Asks Nuclear Balance," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982.

⁶³ "The USSR and the U.S.: Two Approaches to Strategic Arms Limitation and Reduction," Pravda 4 Jan. 1983, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 1 (Feb. 1983), pp. 1-4; see also 2 Jan. 1983 Washington Post article, which gives a preview of this Pravda editorial.

⁶⁴ "Stuck Fast," Pravda, 17 July 1983, p. 5, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 18 July 1983, p. AA2.

⁶⁵ See Moscow World Service, 26 July 1983, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 28 July 1983, p. AA1.

Further, the Soviets appeared extremely concerned about stealth cruise missiles, which were then on the technological horizon.⁶⁶ Such radar-eluding weapons threatened to render impotent and obsolete the extensive Soviet air-defense network.

Soviet threat perceptions with regard to Reagan's strategic modernization program often combined elements of clear exaggeration and accurate insight. For example, Soviet sources anticipated a deployment of 100 MX missiles in upgraded Minuteman silos.⁶⁷ They attributed MX with 11 to 12 warheads each and yields of 500 to 600 kt. with a CEP of 90 meters. This combination of accuracy, yield, and MIRVed warheads indicated that it was intended as a "first-strike" weapon.⁶⁸ MX would disrupt the counterforce balance

⁶⁶ For a representative Soviet view see, A. Mozgovoy, "Who Will Profit from the Cruise Missile?" in Soviet Press: Selected Translations, No. 83-3 (May-June 1983): 110-111.

⁶⁷ Soviet perceptions of the MX and Small ICBM have been concisely analyzed in Roger E. Peterson, et al., Open Source Soviet Perspectives on Minuteman Silo Based Peacekeeper and the Proposed Small Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, (Englewood, CO: Science Applications, Inc., 1 Oct. 1983). See also Jonathan R. Adelman, Soviet Views of Some Political-Military Implications of the MX Missile System, (Englewood, CO: Science Applications, Inc., 1 Oct. 1982). The following section draws primarily on these analyses of Soviet sources.

⁶⁸ It is worth noting that this combination of accuracy, yield, and warheads by itself does not in fact constitute a "first-strike" weapon. It is the basing of MX in vulnerable Minuteman silos that makes it useable only in a "first-strike" mode -- since it cannot be expected to survive a Soviet first-strike and retaliate effectively.

between Soviet nuclear systems and U.S. Minuteman II, Trident C-4, cruise missiles, and Pershing II systems. MX was also seen by the Soviets as an attempt to substantially increase the U.S. strategic nuclear warhead inventory. Finally, Soviet sources indicate that the development of MX was a quantitative and qualitative improvement in U.S. ICBM forces.

The Soviets denounced with particular vigor the efforts of President Reagan to sell the MX missile to Congress as a vital element in his arms reduction plans.⁶⁹ The Soviets were very much aware of Congressional pressures on Reagan to trade support for MX for administration flexibility on arms control.⁷⁰ One Soviet source cited a letter from Senators Nunn, Percy, and Cohen stressing that they "will not vote for the deployment of the MX intercontinental ballistic missiles until the administration takes a new, more flexible position on the question of arms control."⁷¹

⁶⁹ For Reagan's selling of MX as a vital element of his arms reduction policy, see Ronald Reagan, "The MX: A Key to Arms Reduction," Washington Post, 24 May 1983, p. 19. For the Soviet criticism of these efforts, a representative reference would be V. Soldatov, "On a Timely Subject: Contrary to Common Sense," Izvestia, 27 May 1983, p. 4, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 21 (22 June 1983), pp. 11-12.

⁷⁰ See, for example, "Deep Concern," Pravda, 4 May 1983, p. 5, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 18 (1 June 1983), pp. 17-18.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 17.

According to a 1983 Science Applications study, certain ambiguities exist in Soviet perceptions of the Small ICBM (SICM) program. This possibly indicates some doubt in Soviet minds as to whether or when the missile would be deployed:

Areas not addressed in Soviet sources include details on research, development (including possible contractors) and warhead accuracy and explosive power. Most importantly, Soviet authors have not defined the role or mission of the SICM. There is no mention of a first-strike capability or a possible role for the missile in a secure strategic reserve. . . . American defense policy being as it is, the SICM could assume new unpredicted dimensions or disappear altogether. This appears to be the Soviet judgement at this time which is reflected in the paucity of information on the new weapons systems.⁷²

Soviet sources apparently ascribe to the SICM such characteristics as an 8,000 mile range, 15 ton overall weight, and a single warhead. Early Soviet sources predicted 3500 would be deployed by the United States, but later sources reduced that figure to "several hundred." Soviet commentaries also foresaw a mobile basing and criticized this as dangerous and destabilizing (even though new Soviet ICBMs at the time were planned for mobile deployment).⁷³

These perceptions of Reagan's strategic modernization program reflect certain judgments about the intentions of

⁷² Peterson, et al., pp. vii-viii.

⁷³ Ibid., p. vii.

the United States government. The Soviets accused the United States of seeking to use arms control to achieve a condition of superiority over the Soviet Union. In essence, the Soviet Union was accusing the United States of having abandoned the commitment to the "principle of equality" codified in the Basic Principles agreement of 1972.⁷⁴ The Soviets charged that the U.S. position at the Geneva talks was trying to force the Soviet Union to disarm unilaterally while allowing the United States to continue to buildup its nuclear forces, and proceed unhampered with its modest strategic nuclear force modernization efforts. This was clearly a Soviet tactic for discrediting the U.S. position in START.

American arms control policy was seen by the Soviets as one avenue of threat to the condition of parity they claimed existed when the Reagan administration entered office. Soon after negotiations began, Gromyko accused the U.S. of basing its START policy on a desire to upset the strategic status quo: "Its position on this question is based on a desire to change the alignment of forces in the

⁷⁴ "Basic Principles of Relations Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, May 29, 1972," in Coit D. Blacker and Gloria Duffy, eds., International Arms Control: Issues and Agreements, 2nd ed., (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), pp. 429-430.

military field in favor of the United States of America."⁷⁵ Of course, Soviet criticisms to this effect were intended to reduce pressures on the Soviet Union to agree to such measures, and to make the Soviet START proposals appear more reasonable in comparison.

The following Pravda editorial is interesting for its representative criticism of the Reagan approach to START, and for its indignant defense of the heavy Soviet reliance on large offensive ICBMs, which it characterizes as the backbone of the Soviet Union's "strategic defensive might":

The incompatibility of the selective American approach with the principle of equality and equal security is manifest with special clarity in the American side's proposal for dealing with the Soviet ICBMs. An analysis shows that if the whole set of American proposals were accepted, the Soviet side would have to dismantle more than 90% of all its ICBMs, which, as is known, are the basis of the USSR's strategic defensive might. This, it turns out, is the aim of the American plan -- by hook or by crook, to achieve a unilateral weakening of the USSR's defense potential. At the same time, the US, by virtue of the same unilaterally drawn-up proposals, would receive an opportunity to significantly increase the number of warheads on its own ICBMs and to continue the implementation of the programs for a strategic weapon buildup that it has already projected.

Thus, the American approach -- and this can be seen in literally all of its elements -- constitutes not a path to reaching a mutually acceptable accord but a plan, cloaked in the form of proposals for 'reductions,' for the USSR's unilateral disarmament, thereby ensuring

⁷⁵ "A.A. Gromyko's Press Conference in New York," Pravda, 23 June 1982, p. 5, excerpted in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 34, 25 (21 July 1982): 6-7.

for the US its bygone superiority in the strategic field.⁷⁶

The Kremlin was sensitive to what it perceived as American determination to upset the existing "favorable" trend in the correlation of forces. The Soviets recognized several potential threats to the correlation of forces that was established in the 1970s with the help of SALT I and II. In addition to the U.S. approach to START, one of those threats was the U.S. military-technological challenge:

The Kremlin has been and continues to be concerned with the possibility that the United States might achieve a major technological breakthrough in the strategic arms race for which the Soviets would have no credible response in a timely fashion. This concern with U.S. technological virtuosity is suggestive of Soviet expectations that they could not win an all-out strategic arms race.⁷⁷

The Soviets have long been sensitive to new weapons that might upset the balance of power, as this 1972 passage from a Soviet book demonstrates:

The appearance of new types of weapons could seriously affect the balance of military forces between the two world systems. . . . Far-reaching international

⁷⁶ "The USSR and the U.S.: Two Approaches to Strategic Arms Limitation and Reduction," Pravda, 2 Jan. 1983, p. 4, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 1 (2 Feb. 1983), p. 3. (pp. 1-4.)

⁷⁷ Laird and Herspring, p. 88.

consequences could arise in the event that one side possessed qualitatively new strategic weapons.⁷⁸

This sensitivity extended to a fear of the U.S. regaining its erstwhile status of superiority over the Soviet Union, even if momentarily -- a kind of "window of vulnerability" in reverse:

Even a relatively marginal and brief superiority by the United States over the Soviet Union in the development of certain 'old' or 'new' types and systems of weapons could significantly increase the strategic effectiveness of American military force, exert a destabilizing influence on the international political situation throughout the entire world, and create very unfavorable consequences for the cause of peace and socialism.⁷⁹

Robbin F. Laird and Dale R. Herspring have identified two significant elements of the U.S. strategic challenge in the Soviet view as follows:

Soviet commentary does reveal two significant expressions of concern about the nature of the U.S. strategic challenge. First, Soviets note with admiration the inventiveness of U.S. strategic force structure development. The United States has clearly been seen as a dynamic actor in shaping the nature of contemporary warfare. Second, the Soviets especially emphasize the high quality of U.S. scientific and technological capabilities. These capabilities are perceived to be a major force generating the continued U.S. ability to develop strategic power.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ V.M. Kulish, ed., Voennaia Sila i Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenia, (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye Otnoshenia, 1972), p. 222, cited in Ibid., pp. 87-88.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Laird and Herspring, p. 107.

In a 1981 study of Soviet elite opinion, the U.S. International Communication Agency reportedly found an "extremely great respect -- even awe" for American technological and scientific prowess. According to a newspaper account, the study also found that:

Despite the Soviet Union's claims that it can match whatever the United States can do in the arms race or elsewhere, many Russians simply do not believe that. . . On the contrary, it was found, popular Soviet suspicions tend to run in the opposite direction -- that the United States can perform superhuman tasks.⁸¹

The study itself is quoted as saying:

This feeling translates for most Soviets into . . . the belief that if the U.S. wants to, it can change the military balance in its favor almost overnight -- that it can pull some weapon/rabbit out of its technological hat at any moment and leave the Soviet Union far behind in the arms race.⁸²

Only one class of threats were emerging suitable for an arms control response outside the framework of SALT, and thus warranting renewed Soviet interests in negotiations -- U.S. INF deployments. The principal threat to the correlation of forces (from the Soviet point of view) during the START negotiations was U.S. INF deployment plans, and

⁸¹ Gregory Guroff and Steven Grant, Soviet Elites: World Views and Perceptions of the U.S., (Washington, D.C.: Office of Research, The International Communication Agency, 1981), reported and summarized in Murrey Marder, "Soviets View U.S. as Obstructionist," Washington Post, 25 Oct. 1981.

⁸² Ibid.

this had profound implications for Soviet interests in START.

IV. INF AS THE PRINCIPAL THREAT DURING START NEGOTIATIONS

The central hypothesis of this dissertation is that the Soviet Union was relatively more interested in negotiating issues of strategic arms reductions than actually agreeing to such reductions. One line of reasoning supportive of this hypothesis is that during the course of the START negotiations, the Soviets made progress toward a strategic arms reduction agreement contingent upon Western forthcomingness in the INF negotiations. Clearly, resolution of the INF issue had a higher priority in the Soviet view than did START.⁸³

What is important to realize concerning Soviet threat perceptions of NATO's INF modernization is that they reveal the substance of Soviet strategic priorities and objectives. From the Soviet point of view there were real and substantive reasons to fear that NATO's efforts to deploy Pershing II and cruise missiles would begin to undercut Soviet nuclear hegemony in Europe. For example, the Soviets were concerned with the potential for American circumvention of any future START limits or reductions. They had expressed such fears in the SALT negotiations, insisting on

⁸³ "Soviets Add New Twist to Talk Demands," Los Angeles Times, 2 Jan. 1983.

inserting a "non-circumvention" clause in the SALT agreements (i.e. article IX of the ABM Treaty), and demanding the right to compensation for increases in NATO allied submarine strengths beyond the levels provided for in the SALT I agreement.⁸⁴

Soviet suggestions for merging INF and START are further evidence that the Soviets viewed the issues discussed in the two talks as strategically related.⁸⁵ The Soviets continued to make such suggests even after walking out of START and INF.

After outlining Soviet START proposals, Pravda made the following observation:

In putting forward the above-said proposals, the Soviet Union considers the fact that the USA has at its disposal forward-based nuclear means deployed in close proximity to the borders of the USSR and its allies. These weapons are of a strategic character for the USSR. As from its side they are not balanced by anything (we do not have such means close to the territory of the USA), in reducing the number of ICBM's, ballistic missiles in submarines and heavy bombers, the proportion of the American forward-based nuclear means would steadily increase in the strategic balance of the sides.

Therefore, the Soviet proposals presuppose that in a mutual reduction of strategic nuclear forces, the USA will, at least, not build up its other nuclear means,

⁸⁴ See U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Arms Control and Disarmament Agreements: Texts and Histories of Negotiations, (Washington, D.C., 1982), pp. 141 and 157.

⁸⁵ For Soviet suggestions late in the negotiations that START and INF be merged, see Baltimore Sun, 4 October 1983.

⁸⁶ Christian Science Monitor, 20 Dec. 1983.

which are capable of reaching objectives in the Soviet Union's territory. Failing which, the USA would receive a channel for by-passing and, as a matter of fact, undermining the very fundamentals of a future agreement.⁸⁷

Evidence that INF was the principal threat to the correlation of forces as it had developed by the beginning of the 1980s can be found in number of sources. These include Soviet statements to that effect, the fact that the Soviets linked their START position to progress in the INF negotiations, and the fact that other U.S. weapon programs were either running into trouble domestically in Congress (thus obviating the Soviet need to address them at the bargaining table), or were in the early stages of research and development.

NATO's INF modernization plans also posed substantial Soviet incentives for negotiating arms control limits because other U.S. programs were arguably covered by the SALT I and II agreements. Certainly, the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe was much further along at the time the START negotiations convened than other potential sources of U.S. bargaining leverage, such as the MX missile, D-5 SLBM, or B-1 bomber.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Pravda, 4 Jan. 1983.

⁸⁸ Discussed at greater length in the following chapter.

Also, as noted below, the seriousness with which the Soviets threatened counter-measures to NATO's INF deployment may be regarded as further evidence that Soviet INF threat perceptions reflected the genuine concern of Soviet military planners. This deployment threatened both to pose a military threat to Soviet objectives in Europe and to strengthen NATO's political unity, proving that it could stand up to the Soviet Union.⁸⁹

It seems likely that the Soviet Union's previous success in defeating the neutron bomb deployment may also have encouraged the Soviets to engage the West in an arms control effort for potentially beneficial side-effects that would derive from the pressure on Western governments to ensure an environment conducive to "constructive" negotiations.

While the West generally blamed the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan for the final collapse of a détente which had, in any case, been largely illusory since 1976, the Soviets placed the blame détente's demise on NATO's December 1979 decision to deploy GLCMs and Pershing IIs in Europe. This decision, in the Soviet view, sparked a new "crisis in détente".

In considering Soviet threat perceptions of NATO's INF modernization efforts, it is important to appreciate

⁸⁹ Garner, p. 7.

that the Soviets almost certainly exaggerated the INF threat in order to dissuade certain European NATO members from deploying them on their territory. They did this by maximizing the likely military effect of Western GLCM and Pershing II systems deployed in Western Europe. However, there are important reasons for concluding that the Soviets actually perceived NATO's INF modernization as the most serious threat to the "favorable" correlation of forces established through arms control agreements with the United States, and through expansive Soviet weapon programs. Certainly, the NATO INF threat was the most likely to materialize in the near future since U.S. strategic modernization programs were still several years off.

The Soviet Union began its arms control offensive against NATO's INF even before the December 1979 decision to pursue negotiation and deployment options simultaneously. In an attempt at conciliatory preemption, Leonid Brezhnev, speaking in Berlin on 6 October 1979, offered a reduction in "medium-range nuclear means" deployed in the Western USSR, "but only if NATO were first to renounce its plans for additional nuclear deployments."⁹⁰

The Soviet Union kept up the arms control pressure for Western compromises on INF deployment. Eventually, Brezhnev would even add such "sweeteners" as unilateral

⁹⁰ See TASS, 6 Oct. 1979.

troop withdrawals in conjunction with calls for progress in the testudinous MBFR negotiations.

When the West announced the dual track decision, coupling deployment with calls for arms control, the Soviets insisted at first that the basis for constructive negotiations had been destroyed. This position was to change twice during the negotiations. It first changed in a July 1980 Brezhnev meeting with Chancellor Schmidt. At that time, the Soviet precondition that NATO suspend the planned deployments before negotiations started was dropped, to be replaced by allowing negotiations to proceed but on the condition that the deployments be rescinded before any agreement was signed.

Western analysts describe Soviet perceptions of the NATO INF threat in the following terms:

[C]ruise missiles deployed on land in Europe raise some distinct and additional problems for the Soviets. One is that GLCMs deployed in Germany could increase the likelihood that any conventional conflict in Central Europe could escalate rapidly to nuclear strikes against the USSR. Another problem is emotional in character for the Soviets -- Germany would be the source of such strikes. Third, the Soviets might be concerned that conventionally-armed variants of long-range GLCMs could in the future help NATO out of its long-standing nuclear dilemma.

But Soviet concerns about the INF deployments are clearly not confined to GLCMs. The minimal warning time provided by the Pershing II ballistic missile puts Soviet early warning systems under greater stress than they faced previously. . . even if the Pershings do not now have sufficient range, they could in the future be upgraded in range and number (from the currently planned 108) and could then pose a serious threat to

Soviet command and control facilities and other time-urgent targets in the western USSR.⁹¹

This analysis identifies most, but not all, of the Soviet concerns with NATO's INF modernization plans. There were four basic facets, or elements, to Soviet INF threat perceptions reflected in Soviet literature. Of course, these do not necessarily reflect actual Soviet concerns with Pershing IIs and GLCMs. Some of those concerns were mentioned in the passage above. But what needs to be stressed here is that the Soviets genuinely saw these systems as real threats to the correlation of forces that favored their strategic deterrence requirements. The four basic elements of Soviet commentaries on NATO INF deployments included the following assertions:⁹²

- 1) The Pershings and Cruise Missiles will give NATO fundamentally new weapon capabilities;
- 2) They will circumvent the existing inter-continental equilibrium embodied in SALT II;
- 3) They will destroy the existing equilibrium in Europe;
- 4) The NATO decision reflects a US strategy to "Europeanize" and fight a limited nuclear war.

⁹¹ Robert J. Einhorn, Negotiating from Strength: Leverage in U.S.-Soviet Arms Control Negotiations, (New York: Praeger, 1985), p. 17.

⁹² These four Soviet threat perception themes are drawn from Garner, p. 12, and U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Soviet Propaganda Campaign Against NATO, (Washington, D.C.: ACDA, Oct. 1983).

An analysis of these four themes demonstrates that Soviet concern with NATO's INF modernization program was, to a large extent, substantive (from the Soviet point of view). Although Soviet commentaries on the subject were mingled with blandishments and often had an extortionary character, the Soviets had reason to believe that Pershing and cruise missiles would in some way upset the strategic situation they had carefully cultivated in Europe, one that accorded them clear nuclear superiority, and, in the case of intermediate-range nuclear weapons, virtual hegemony. Soviet threat perception themes regarding NATO's INF deployment furnish evidence of the substance of Soviet concerns with what must in all fairness be termed a modest (and militarily questionable) response to Soviet nuclear hegemony in Europe. They are elaborated below.

1. The Pershings and cruise missiles will give NATO fundamentally new weapon capabilities. Soviet literature claimed that NATO INF deployment would eventually involve 3000 warheads on over 1000 missiles. The Soviets insisted that this would give NATO fundamentally new weapon capabilities, upsetting the existing correlation of forces. This argument was put forward to counter the NATO argument that PIIs/GLCMs were made necessary by the 'new' SS-20 capabilities. Soviet literature claimed that these 'new' capabilities consisted of increased range, strike speed,

accuracy, and survivability.⁹³ It was further claimed that NATO INF deployment would give the U.S. substantially increased strategic capabilities against the USSR. But perhaps the greatest Soviet concern in terms of fundamental changes to Western strategic capabilities was the fear that INF would "increase the possibility of West Germany acquiring 'strategic' missile forces."⁹⁴

The Soviets claimed all along that the SS-20 was a 'reaction' made necessary by American actions, as amply illustrated in the passage below by Soviet leader Brezhnev. Brezhnev makes three points. First, Soviet weapon deployments are reactions to NATO initiatives, and are necessitated by strictly defensive motivations. Second, a condition of parity characterizes the East-West Eurostrategic balance. Third, as far as the Soviet Union is concerned, NATO's intermediate range nuclear forces are strategic in nature.

Now put yourself in our position. Could we watch impartially as one surrounded us on all sides with military bases, as a growing number of carriers of atomic death in different parts of Europe were aimed at Soviet towns and factories, regardless in what shape: as sea- or land-based missiles, bombers or the like? The Soviet Union had to build weapons to defend itself, not to threaten anybody, Europe least of all. We built them and stationed them on our own territory and in an amount that counterbalances the arsenal of those who have declared themselves our potential opponents.

⁹³ Garner, pp. 12-17.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 28.

If one counts as medium-range weapons on NATO's side the main nuclear missile and air force units in territories of West European countries and waters bordering on Europe that can reach targets in the Soviet Union -- that is, those with a range of a thousand kilometers and more (of course, below the intercontinental range) -- as well as the Soviet arms of corresponding range stationed in the European part of the U.S.S.R., there is at present in Europe an approximate parity between NATO and the U.S.S.R. in such weapons.

. . . the targets of the American rockets are strategic objects on the territory of the U.S.S.R. and that the new American carriers can be used as first-strike weapons.⁹⁵

Ustinov further reinforces Brezhnev's arguments cited above by characterizing the Soviet position in the following terms:

The United States is making a determined effort to upgrade NATO arms by means of new medium-range nuclear missiles. Realization of this plan would mean a considerable upsetting in favor of the West of the approximate equilibrium of forces that has been established here and would create on the continent and on a global scale a qualitatively new military strategic situation.⁹⁶

2. NATO's INF deployments will circumvent the existing inter-continental equilibrium embodied in SALT

⁹⁵ "Excerpts from Brezhnev's Printed Answers," New York Times, 4 Nov. 1981.

⁹⁶ "Extracts from Remarks by Soviet Minister of Defense Ustinov," Moscow Domestic Service, 6 Nov. 1981, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 9 Nov. 1981, pp. 07-011; also reprinted in Documents on Disarmament, 1981, (Washington, D.C.), p. 545.

II.⁹⁷ In connection with the argument that NATO INF deployment would circumvent existing arms agreements, the Soviets declared that SALT II would be of little or no value (to them) if NATO INF deployments were to go through.

The Soviets insisted that NATO INF deployments would compensate the U.S. for reductions that were to have been carried out under SALT II. Some Soviet commentaries went so far as to suggest that NATO INF deployments would be a violation of SALT II, or at least that NATO INF deployments would undercut the importance of SALT II to Soviet security.

3. NATO's INF deployments will destroy the existing equilibrium in Europe.⁹⁸ Another prominent theme in the Soviet literature on NATO's INF deployments was that it would destroy the existing strategic situation in Europe characterized by the Soviets as "rough parity" or "equilibrium." There were three reasons the Soviets frequently cited to support this charge:

- 1) according to the Soviet count, NATO's planned INF deployment would give NATO nuclear superiority in Central Europe;⁹⁹
- 2) NATO's argument that its modernization program is necessary to offset Soviet deployment of SS-20s is spurious, since Soviet SS-20s "are intended to

⁹⁷ Semeyko, "Washington's 'Eurostrategic' Stake," Novoye Vremya, 4 July 1980; and, "Strategy of Parity and 'Eurostrategy' of Superiority," Co-existence, 17, 2 (Oct. 1980): 158-59; cited by Garner, p. 20.

⁹⁸ Garner, pp. 21, 24-25.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

fulfill the same tasks as the medium-range missiles they replace . . . and cannot serve as a pretext for the deployment of new types of American nuclear missile weapons in the region."¹⁰⁰

- 3) Soviet forces are equal to the existing British and French forces, and additional U.S. forces will give NATO incremental superiority.¹⁰¹

The Soviets reiterated charges that NATO's INF plans were a sinister U.S. plot to acquire nuclear superiority by stratagem. The following citation is typical of Soviet commentaries on this score:

The belligerent circles of the United States and NATO have adopted a policy of subverting the military-strategic balance which has been brought about. They are striving to achieve military superiority over us, and are trying to impose a state of siege on the countries of socialism to roll back the forces of national and social liberation.¹⁰²

The Soviets repeatedly claimed that NATO intended to acquire nuclear superiority, and that deployment of Pershing and cruise missiles would dramatically alter the existing strategic balance in Europe:

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 24. Garner cites Lt. Gen. Petrov, "Hopeless Course: The US and NATO Attempt to Disrupt Military Equilibrium," Pravda, 16 June 1980.

¹⁰¹ Garner, p. 25.

¹⁰² "Extracts from Remarks by Soviet Minister of Defense Ustinov," Moscow Domestic Service, 6 Nov. 1981, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 9 Nov. 1981, pp. 07-011; also reprinted in Documents on Disarmament, 1981, (Washington, D.C.), p. 544.

The dangerous plan for the deployment of new American nuclear missiles on the territory of Western Europe . . . would substantially change the strategic situation on the continent. Their objective is to upset the existing balance of forces in Europe and to try to ensure military superiority for the NATO bloc.¹⁰³

4. The NATO decision reflects a US strategy to 'Europeanize' and fight a limited nuclear war. The United States not only sought to upset a strategic balance that had been carefully crafted through decades of effort, but the United States also aimed to 'Europeanize' any future U.S.-Soviet nuclear war, and limit damage to the European continent. This was the fourth theme of Soviet INF threat perceptions, and it obviously sought to exploit European anxieties concerning U.S. security guarantees to its NATO allies.

Soviet commentaries incorporating this theme also suggested that the U.S. would seek to win a nuclear war by augmenting its own first-strike capability with deployments of INF weapons in Europe, and that the U.S. was determined to turn Western Europe "into a launchpad for U.S. first-strike weapons." Soviet commentators even cited Presidential Directive 59 (President Carter's 1980 nuclear

¹⁰³ Brezhnev in Pravda, 7 Oct. 1979, cited in Vernon V. Aspaturian, "Soviet Global Power and the Correlation of Forces," Problems of Communism, 29, 3 (May-June 1983), p. 7.

deterrence policy) as supporting such a conclusion.¹⁰⁴ One Western analysis noted that:

[T]he Soviets allege that the US seeks to introduce sufficient preemptive counterforce systems into Europe so that their combination of strike speed, accuracy and range could be critical to a strategic disarming strike against the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁵

In this regard, the following polemic is also of interest:

It comes out that the possibility to use nuclear weapons in the 'European theatre of military operation' is being elevated to the status of a military doctrine. As if Europe, where hundreds of millions of people live, were already doomed to become a theatre of military operations. As if it were a box of little tin figurines which do not deserve a better fate than being melted in the flames of nuclear explosions.¹⁰⁶

Also in connection with the theme that the U.S. planned to fight a limited nuclear war in Europe and to pursue a policy of first-strike, the Soviets claimed that NATO INF deployment would reduce 'warning times' and threaten large areas of Soviet territory.¹⁰⁷ The following passage provides another example of Soviet statements alleging U.S. intentions to make NATO INF modernization part of a first-strike policy, and seeks to develop support for

¹⁰⁴ Garner, pp. 30-31.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

¹⁰⁶ "Address by Soviet President Brezhnev: Medium-Range Nuclear Forces," TASS, 23 Nov. 1981, reprinted in Documents on Disarmament 1981, p. 618.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Soviet efforts to extract a no-first-use (of nuclear weapons) from the United States:

Plans for a first nuclear strike against the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Treaty countries are being hatched in Washington. A fresh confirmation of this was a report by the American television company NBC concerning the existence of a "top-secret report" prepared by the U.S. Congress. The cynical conclusion made in this report is that the U.S. Armed Forces in Western Europe do not allegedly have enough conventional arms for a war with the Soviet Union -- and this is said about the American Army which is armed to the teeth in this region -- that [the] United States will have to use tactical nuclear weapons at an early stage of a military conflict. So that is the reason which Washington flatly refuses to follow the Soviet Union's example and pledge not to make first use of nuclear weapons. The impression is that the USA wants to be free to make a first nuclear strike with all means at its disposal and use Western Europe, because of its proximity to the Soviet Union, as a convenient staging ground for such an attack and, accordingly, as a target for a retaliatory blow, in the hope that Americans, lying overseas, will not suffer.¹⁰⁸

In their propaganda offensive against NATO's INF deployment, the Soviets cited Western media reports. A Pravda article cited a Los Angeles Times article by U.S. General B. Rogers to the effect that "the North Atlantic block is prepared to use nuclear weapons in the event of a military conflict and, moreover, to do so first."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ Ivan Ablamov, TASS, 15 July 1983, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 18 July 1983, p. AA8.

¹⁰⁹ V. Dobkov, "Rejoinder: Rogers Spells It Out," Pravda, 14 July 1983, p. 5, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 18 July 1983, p. AA10.

There is further evidence to suggest that Soviet INF threat perceptions were reflections of a genuine strategic concern with priority over intercontinental-range nuclear weapons. Central Europe has traditionally been the focal point of Soviet geographic attentions, especially in a security context.¹¹⁰ Soviets military planners have historically relied on a 'Europe first' strategy by which the Soviet Union hoped to deter American aggression by holding U.S. allies in Europe hostage to a nuclear retaliation. Soviet nuclear weapon deployments began with, and continued to emphasize, a European orientation.¹¹¹ The persistent Soviet concern with 'Forward Based Systems' [FBS] has been noted earlier and is a symptom of this European orientation. The Soviets began SALT I, SALT II, INF, and START negotiations with calls for restricting U.S. FBS.

Also, an important long-term Soviet objective in Europe has been to "detach Western Europe from its

¹¹⁰ For treatments of this theme, see: Coit Dennis Blacker, "The Soviet Perception of European Security," in Derek Leebaert, ed., European Security: Prospects for the 1980s, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1979), pp. 137-161; and Thomas W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970).

¹¹¹ Thomas W. Wolfe, Soviet Power and Europe, 1945-1970, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), pp. 40-42.

dependence on the United States, especially where defense is concerned, and to make it dependent on the USSR."¹¹²

Further evidence of the substantive character of Soviet INF threat perceptions is expressed in Soviet threats of countermeasures. There are several reasons why, in the Soviet view, NATO's INF modernization plans warranted an arms control response that eclipsed Soviet interests in a START agreement. First, the Soviets had very successfully addressed their European concerns in SALT I and II with non-circumvention clauses and unilateral statements. The international environment of détente and relaxation of tensions characterizing much of the 1970s reinforced the natural Western reluctance to expend resources on military forces, especially nuclear forces. This environment was promoted both by arms agreements and by on-going negotiations.

Second, the Soviets may have also calculated that NATO's INF plans were most vulnerable to an arms control solution prior to their deployment, and this may have accounted for their priority over START. The Soviets were experienced in playing to West European audiences, and it was that audience which could most effectively bring unilateral pressure to bear on the U.S. and other Western

¹¹² Richard Pipes, "Détente: Moscow's View," in Richard Pipes, ed., Soviet Strategy in Europe, (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976), p. 23.

governments to accede to Soviet offers for arms control settlements.

Third, arms control was a Soviet method for increasing the political cost to Western governments desiring to proceed with NATO's INF deployments. David Yost, for example, has argued that the Soviet campaign against NATO's INF modernization plans appeared to have failed with the deployment of GLCMs in November 1983, but that it may have ultimately yielded three successes for Moscow by contributing to: (1) the polarization of West European political parties; (2) the delegitimization of NATO's transatlantic security consensus; and, (3) the socialization of the West European successor generation toward greater neutralism.¹¹³

V. CONCLUSIONS

An important incentive for Soviet interests in negotiating issues of strategic arms reductions with the United States in the 1981 to 1983 time frame involved Soviet perceptions of threats to the correlation of forces. The Soviets entered the 1980s satisfied that a combination of arms control constraints and its own modernization programs had established a favorable trend in the correlation of

¹¹³ David S. Yost, "The Soviet Campaign Against INF In West Germany," in Soviet Strategic Deception, eds. Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 345-347.

forces that meant the strategic balance was evolving in a manner that facilitated greater flexibility in the achievement of Soviet foreign and military objectives.

Among the many potential threats to that correlation of forces, in the Soviet view, were key elements of Reagan's strategic modernization program and NATO's plans to deploy new generation INF systems. Of these two general areas, clearly NATO's INF deployment intentions were the most grave. Soviet perceptions of the INF threat underly its indirect motives in negotiating strategic arms reductions, as well as its more direct motives in the INF negotiations themselves.

Knowing that the U.S. placed highest priority on resolving the vulnerability of its strategic nuclear forces to the superior Soviet ICBM arsenal by negotiating reductions in offensive intercontinental strength, the Soviets sought to exploit this leverage by pressuring the West to address its own greatest concern -- INF deployment plans.

In the Soviet view, NATO's INF deployment plans apparently threatened the correlation of forces in several ways. First, they would grant NATO fundamentally new and improved capabilities in terms of weapon prelaunch survivability, increased range, greater response speed, and upgraded accuracies. This combination threatened an incremental reduction in the Soviet nuclear advantage in

Europe. Second, a principal Soviet objective in SALT had been to place constraints on the U.S. option of circumventing restrictions on intercontinental weapons by placing the Soviet Union in an analogous dilemma with shorter ranger nuclear weapons placed nearer Soviet borders in Western Europe. NATO's INF deployment plans represented a potential realization of that concern, and consequently downgraded the value of strategic arms limitations to the USSR. Third, the Soviets insisted that parity in nuclear weapons existed in Europe. Additional NATO weapons would upset that equilibrium.

Perhaps the greatest threat posed by NATO's INF deployment plans did not concern the military dimension of the correlation of forces. After all, NATO intended to deploy only 574 warheads -- a fraction of the SS-20 inventory. Moreover, NATO withdrew 1400 warheads in conjunction with its modernization plans, representing a net disarmament. NATO also planned to spread its INF deployment out over several years, maximizing the Soviet opportunity to counter it with additional weapons of its own or by exploiting the opposition of Western peace movements to NATO nuclear policies. In strictly military terms, NATO's INF modernization (by design) posed a relatively modest threat to the Soviet Union. It must be concluded, therefore, that in the Soviet view, the greatest threat was not military, but political. Successful implementation of its INF

modernization plans would signal Allied unity, substantiate American leadership of the Atlantic Alliance, sanction the legitimacy of American security interests in Europe, and strengthen the resolve of West European governments to resist Soviet blandishments -- all of which undermine Soviet objectives in Europe.

The greatest threat to the correlation of forces was, therefore, primarily political in nature. A political threat is best met by a political instrument. Initiating and sustaining an arms control process offered, in the Soviet view, the best chance of eliminating the INF threat at the lowest cost (in both military and political terms) to the Soviet Union. This conclusion substantiates the hypothesis that Soviet interests in START were best served by arms control negotiations rather than agreements.

CHAPTER THREE

U.S. AND SOVIET BARGAINING POSITIONS IN START

This dissertation has sought to establish that the context of Soviet START policy was not conducive to a strategic arms reduction agreement, and that Soviet political and foreign policy objectives were effectively served by START negotiations even though these negotiations made little progress toward an actual agreement. The Soviet assessment of the correlation of forces did not warrant a strategic arms reduction agreement, since the correlation was clearly in the Soviet favor and a strategic arms reduction agreement (at least one that was even nominally mutually beneficial) would have upset the favorable balance (and trends in that balance) that the Soviets had with determination achieved over the previous 15 years. Further militating against the achievement of a START agreement in this time period was the abject deficiency in U.S.

bargaining leverage in those categories of armament under negotiation in START (e.g. large land-based ICBMs and throw-weight).

The START experience proves the adage that an arms agreement will only reflect the actual military balance (or the likely very near-term military balance) existing between the given parties at the time of agreement. Soviet agreement to Reagan's START proposals would have unquestionably promoted strategic stability as understood in the West. That is, after making the proposed reductions in nuclear warheads, neither side would have possessed an ability to undertake a disarming first strike against the other with high confidence. Stability, as understood by the Soviet Union, resides in the ability to dominate an opponent at all levels of potential conflict. The U.S. could not have seriously expected (and probably did not expect) the Soviets to make a disproportionate sacrifice in strategic nuclear assets for the sake of enshrining Western principles of strategic stability not shared by Moscow.

The previous chapter looked at Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces and various threats to the strategic relationship the Soviets had labored to establish through arms control arrangements with the United States and by unilateral initiatives of their own. It concluded that the Soviets saw in Reagan's strategic modernization program a sufficient cause for concern to warrant attempting to

regulate, delay, or thwart U.S. efforts by subjecting those programs to negotiation, while phrasing their proposals in such a manner as to leave recent Soviet modernization efforts relatively unrestricted.

This chapter argues that, while President Reagan's efforts to initiate a strategic force modernization program provided the Soviet Union with sufficient incentive to seek negotiations, the U.S. lacked the substantive bargaining leverage to interest the Soviets in an actual strategic arms reduction agreement. As discussed below, there is always a trade-off in seeking arms control outcomes. In attempting to maximize the pay-off in terms of restrictions on U.S. systems the Soviets try to pay as little as possible in restrictions on their own systems.

There are two dimensions to bargaining leverage as developed by Robert J. Einhorn.¹ From the Soviet perspective, there is the question of which U.S. systems the Soviets would like to limit, ban, or otherwise restrict. Another dimension is, of course, which systems of their own the Soviets are willing to negotiate away in exchange for limits on U.S. programs. This chapter is therefore divided into two parts. The first part examines the relative bargaining position of the United States in the START

¹ Robert J. Einhorn, Negotiating From Strength: Leverage in U.S.-Soviet Arms Control Negotiations, (New York: Praeger, 1985).

negotiations from 1981 to 1983, including an evaluation of Reagan's strategic modernization program and the extent to which it provided the U.S. with bargaining leverage toward an agreement on strategic arms reduction. This will also include a discussion of the domestic pressures on the Reagan administration, and some judgments on how this may have undercut the bargaining leverage of the United States, and hence the ability of the U.S. to secure a strategic arms reduction agreements on favorable terms. The second part will examine how Soviet military objectives and priorities affect Soviet willingness to consider arms control restrictions on their own weapon systems.

While the previous chapter sought to establish the relationship between elements of Soviet threat perceptions in general -- and Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces in particular -- and Soviet desires and objectives for engaging the U.S. in strategic arms reduction talks, this chapter will seek to demonstrate that American nuclear weapon programs as perceived by the Soviets constituted insufficient bargaining leverage to interest the Soviets in an accord providing for substantial cuts in offensive nuclear forces along the lines first suggested by President Reagan in his 1982 Eureka address.

There were three basic sources of disincentives for Soviet interest in an accord providing for deep reductions in offensive nuclear strength. First, as was shown in the

previous chapter on Soviet threat perceptions, NATO's INF modernization program constituted the graver, more immediate threat to Soviet interests than did any of the key elements of Reagan's strategic modernization program. NATO's contemplated INF assets posed the potential for U.S. circumvention of any limits or reductions in intercontinental range forces by making up for cuts in long-range weapons by covering the same targets with larger deployments of intermediate-range forces closer to Soviet borders. Until that loophole (from the Soviet perspective) was resolved, there could be no point in a strategic arms reduction agreement. (Although negotiations on reducing strategic arms could be -- and were -- used by the Soviets as one more forum for putting pressure on the U.S. and its NATO allies to cancel INF deployment plans.)

Second, President Reagan's strategic modernization program faced considerable Congressional opposition. The domestic vulnerability of U.S. strategic weapons programs was exploited by Soviet intransigence in the START negotiations. One aspect of this domestic vulnerability that crippled the value of whatever incipient U.S. strategic weapon modernization programs may have had as bargaining leverage in START was Congressional threats to link funding to progress in negotiations.² Congressional efforts and

² See the treatment of this subject in Chapter Three.

intentions to legislate U.S. compliance with unratified arms agreements may be viewed as another domestic source of disincentives for Soviet forthcomingness in strategic arms reduction negotiations.³

Third, most key elements of U.S. strategic force programs underway in the early 1980s had been on the planning boards since the early 1970s and had experienced multiple delays imposed by political considerations. It is important to note that the Soviets may derive considerable satisfaction from at least two points regarding Reagan's strategic nuclear force "build-up." First, the U.S. entered the START negotiations long before there were any prospects of Reagan's military program actually materializing. Since the Administration had first portrayed such a restoration of American nuclear strength as a prerequisite to negotiations, the Soviets could view the U.S. presence at the negotiating table prior to this as a concession. Second, from the perspective of the late 1980s, the Soviets might also take satisfaction in realizing that Reagan's strategic modernization program never materialized to the extent he originally planned.

The Soviets reacted indignantly to official U.S. suggestions that Congress approve funding for new weapon

³ Bruce Fein, "Negotiating with the Soviets by the House of Representatives: Unconstitutional and Improvident," National Security Record, No. 95 (October 1986), p. 5.

systems to improve the U.S. bargaining position in START.

It may be recalled that in the spring of 1983 the Scowcroft Commission recommended congressional approval of the MX and Small ICBM programs for largely arms control reasons.

Soviet General Secretary Yuri Andropov made the following statement in a speech to a joint meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation in December 1982:

No programmes of a further arms build-up will ever force the Soviet Union to make unilateral concessions. We will be compelled to counter the challenge of the American side by deploying corresponding weapons systems of our own -- an analogous missile to counter the MX missile, and our own long-range cruise missile, which we are already testing, to counter the U.S. long-range cruise missile.

Those are not threats at all. We are wholly averse to any such course of events, and are doing everything to avoid it. But it is essential that those who shape U.S. policy, as well as the public at large, should be perfectly clear on the real state of affairs. Hence, if the people in Washington really believe that new weapons systems will be a 'trump' for the Americans at negotiations, we want them to know that these 'trumps' are false. Any policy directed to securing military superiority over the Soviet Union has no future and can only heighten the threat of war.⁴

⁴ TASS, 21 Dec. 1982, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 21 Dec. 1982, pp. B8-B11, and reprinted in U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament 1982, (Washington: USGPO, 1985), p. 920.

The Soviet Union recognized that changes in the U.S. START position were often related to changes in the White House's deployment plans for various U.S. systems:

When the United States needed, say, to ensure the deployment in the future of another new type of intercontinental ballistic missile "Midgetman" -- in addition to the newest ICBM "MX" which are to add not less than 1,000 high-yield warheads to the U.S. nuclear arsenal, the U.S. delegation in Geneva immediately stated readiness to "adjust" its position. It would not now be against raising the level of 850 units for deployed land-based and sea-launched ballistic missiles, which was earlier suggested by the U.S. side. And this is being presented as "flexibility." In actual fact they try to open yet another channel of the strategic arms race.⁵

Such charges are often accompanied by claims of Soviet flexibility, or by assertions that Soviet programs have not "upset" the balance, but "restored" it:

I declare quite emphatically: the Soviet Union has done nothing since the signature of the SALT II treaty in 1979 in the area of strategic arms which could lead to a change in the existing approximate situation of parity.

In contrast, new military programs are continually being approved in the United States. It looks as though in Washington they are not working toward reductions but toward increases in strategic arms and toward making the negotiations depend on the speed of the armaments assembly lines.⁶

5 "Stuck Fast," Pravda, 17 July 1983, p. 5, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 18 July 1983, p. AA1.

6 "Excerpts from Brezhnev's Printed Answers," New York Times, 4 Nov. 1981,

The Reagan administration claimed that the Soviet presence at the START talks was proof that its weapons procurement policies had provided arms control payoffs. Of course, the Soviet Union adamantly denied this, saying:

The Soviet Union was quick to come to the negotiation table because it is prepared for talks and willing to resume them . . . We are prepared to continue the relevant negotiations with the United States without delay, preserving all the positive elements that have so far been achieved in this area."

Soviet spokesman Sergey Vishnevskiy wrote in Pravda two days later:⁷

It can be stated with certainty that these negotiations would not have taken place, had it not been for the USSR which exerted persistent purposeful efforts aimed at restraining such armaments.

The Soviet Union approaches the negotiations with the sincere intention to work for elaboration of such a decision that would promote consolidation of international stability, the interests of peace. The Soviet Union's decision to undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons is a profound stimulus for the Geneva negotiations.⁸

I. COMPONENTS OF THE U.S. BARGAINING POSITION IN START

A. The Reagan Strategic Modernization Program

⁷ Igor Dmitriyev in Moscow World Service, 2 July 1982, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 6 July 1982, p. AA1.

⁸ TASS, 4 July 1982, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 6 July 1982, p. AA2.

Reagan pledged both during his presidential campaign and afterward that he would restore America's strategic nuclear strength before proceeding to arms negotiations with the Soviets. Indeed, the 1980 Republican Party platform had clearly declared this objective. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, in his Fiscal Year 1983 Report to Congress, boasted that "President Reagan's program for strategic forces, while consuming less than 15 percent of defense spending over the next five years, will give us the greatest addition of modern, strengthened strategic forces planned and funded by any United States President."⁹ The stated objectives of President Reagan's strategic force modernization program were twofold: first, to restore American strength sufficiently to tide it over a so-called "window of vulnerability" in the mid-1980s;¹⁰ second, to provide the United States with the necessary leverage to secure a viable strategic arms control accord with the Soviet Union.

The proposed strategic modernization program consisted of five elements. They included improvement of U.S. strategic command and control systems, modernization of the manned bomber force, deployment of new submarine-

⁹ Caspar W. Weinberger, Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1983, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. GPO, Feb. 1982), p. I-39.

¹⁰ Ibid.

launched ballistic missiles, improvements in the survivability and accuracy of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles in conjunction with the deployment of a new generation ICBM, and upgrading of U.S. strategic defenses.¹¹ In terms of additional deployed strength, Reagan's strategic modernization program proposed continued funding for a new SLBM (the D-5), additional construction of new Trident ballistic missile submarines, a new ICBM (the MX), two new bombers (the B-1 and the 'Advanced Technology Bomber'), and development of air- and sea-launched cruise missiles.¹²

Specifically, the Administration's original plans called for procurement of 100 MX missiles with 10 warheads each. 40 were to be deployed initially in Minuteman silos. Three approaches to MX survivability were proposed for further study: (1) deep underground basing; (2) continuous airborne patrol basing; and, (3) some form of ballistic missile defense.¹³ The Administration planned to procure 100 B-1B manned strategic bombers, with initial operational capability (IOC) sometime in 1986. Trident submarines were to be procured at the rate of one per year, with two funded

¹¹ Ibid., pp. I-39-40.

¹² It should be noted that all of these programs were in existence at the time Reagan assumed office.

¹³ Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1983, p. I-42.

in fiscal year 1983 to make up for the lack of funding in fiscal year 1982. Furthermore, "several hundred" nuclear sea-launched cruise missiles were to be procured for deployment on general purpose submarines beginning in 1984. The Trident D-5 SLBM was to be deployed in 1989.¹⁴

None of these programs would mature before 1984, even if they proceeded according to schedule (see Table 3.1), and in comparison to Soviet strategic nuclear force modernization efforts, they were profoundly modest. The Reagan strategic modernization program also provided for unilateral reductions in U.S. nuclear forces, involving the deactivation of 52 Titan II ICBMs and the phasing out of the B-52D manned bomber.

B. U.S. Bargaining Leverage in START

In START the United States chose to propose limits on systems in which it was quantitatively inferior relative to the Soviet Union. Some critics charged that this was proof that the Administration was not serious about reaching a viable strategic arms accord with the USSR. On the other hand, the Administration was merely proposing arms control restrictions on those systems that most threatened stability as it was understood and pursued in the West. The administration should not be blamed for seeking terms of agreement that would have been supportive of American

¹⁴ Ibid., pp. I-40-42.

strategic requirements. Failure to secure a START agreement in the 1982-1983 time period was not a result of choosing the wrong units of limitation on which to negotiate the terms of an agreement, but of U.S. quantitative inferiority in those units of limitation.

In other words, one major source of Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement prior to 1984 was the lack of U.S. bargaining leverage those systems that were the subject of the START negotiations. During the course of the START negotiations, the United States proposed at least 12 principal units of limitation and 4 major categories of aggregate systems. These are given in the figure below. The point is that at the time

Table 3.1

THE REAGAN STRATEGIC MODERNIZATION PROGRAM:
INITIAL DEPLOYMENT DATES AS OF 1982*

<u>Weapon Program</u>	<u>Date of Initial Deployment</u>
MX ICBM	1986
Small ICBM	1992**
Trident SSBN (w/C4)	1980***
Trident D-5 SLBM	1989
B-1B****	1986
ATB ('Stealth' bomber)	1990s
ALCM	1982***
SLCM	1984

* Fiscal Year 1983 Annual DoD Report, pp. III-57 to III-63.

** International Institute for Strategic Studies, Military Balance, 1983-1984, p. 23.

*** Ibid., pp. 118-120.

**** The IOC for the B-1B was moved forward one year to 1985 according to the Department of Defense's Fiscal Year 1984 Report, p. 223.

of proposing them, the United States was inferior to the Soviet Union in nearly all categories, and certainly in the categories of weapons the Administration most wanted to curtail (i.e. "heavy" missiles). As Table 3.2 demonstrates, the United States went into the START negotiations with a numerical disadvantage hard bargaining leverage.

The Soviets understood that the MX program, as it emerged from the give and take compromises between Congress and the White House, was rationalized on largely arms control grounds. They went out of their way to make sure the United States understood that they rejected this argument completely. A 1 July 1983 Pravda commentary carried by TASS began with the following statement:

The Reagan administration is known to have succeeded in railroading through the U.S. Congress a programme for the production and deployment of new intercontinental 'MX' missiles, worth billions of dollars, only due to the promises to give a greater flexibility and constructive character to the stand of the USA at the talks with the USSR on questions of limitation and reduction of strategic weapons.¹⁵

Among the three U.S. cruise missile programs (air-launched, sea-launched, and ground-launched), the Soviets have been especially concerned about sea- and ground-launched versions. Robert Einhorn writes:

¹⁵ "Deception Is an Unreliable Method," Pravda, 1 July 1983, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 1 July 1983, p. AA 1.

U.S. AND SOVIET BARGAINING POSITIONS IN START

Table 3.2

U.S.-SOVIET STRATEGIC BALANCE
IN TERMS OF UNITS OF LIMITATION
PROPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES IN START
(1982 Figures)

<u>Strategic Delivery Vehicles</u>	<u>U.S.</u>	<u>U.S.S.R.</u>
-ICBMs	1049	1398
"heavy" ICBMs	0	308
"medium" ICBMs	49	300
"light" ICBMs	1000	790
-MIRVed ICBMs	550	752
-SLBMs	520	969
-MIRVed SLBMs	520	224
-long-range bombers	355	245
 <u>Strategic Nuclear Warheads</u>		
-ICBM warheads	2149	5862
-MIRVed ICBM warheads	1650	5216
-SLBM warheads	4800	1865
-MIRVed SLBM warheads	4800	1120
 <u>Aggregate Categories</u>		
-total ICBMs and SLBMs	1569	2367
-total ICBM and SLBM warheads	6949	7727
-total MIRVed ICBM and SLBM warheads	6450	6336
-total (ICBM and SLBM) throw-weight (in millions of pounds)	3.7	12.5

Sources: John M. Collins, U.S.-Soviet Military Balance, 1980-1985, (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985), pp. 173-183; The Military Balance, 1981-1982, (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981), pp. 104-107; Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Military Posture For FISCAL YEAR 1982, (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1981); and, U.S. Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power, 1st ed., (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1981).

Soviet persistence in constraining cruise missiles has been strongest in the case of long-range SLCMs and GLCMs, where the Soviets have never deviated, either in SALT or START, from their position that the deployment of such systems should be banned. Their attitude toward ALCMs has been less strict.¹⁶

The reasons are obvious. Sea- and ground-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) are the most difficult to defend against, and may have the shortest warning times. Ground-launched cruise missiles have an added disadvantage (in the Soviet view) in that they are stationed on the territories of America's European allies -- with all the implications for NATO unity and "German hands on the nuclear trigger" that entails. Air-launched cruise missiles are relatively easier to deal with since their launch platforms (heavy bombers) can be detected and defended against. Soviet priorities regarding cruise missiles may also reflect greater confidence in their air-defense network to handle air-launched versions. On the reasons for the less strict Soviet attitude toward constraining ALCMs, Einhorn writes:

First, as their own cruise missile programs progressed and as their air defense capability against small, low-flying missiles improved, both the potential U.S. advantage from ALCMs and the Soviet 'need' for strict limits decreased. Second, once the introduction of ALCMs became inevitable, the more relevant comparison for the Soviets in determining their negotiating priorities was not between U.S. and Soviet ALCMs, but between the threat posed by U.S. ALCMs and the threat posed by U.S. ballistic missiles . . . it appears that the Soviets do not find U.S. ALCMs any more threatening

¹⁶ Einhorn, Negotiating from Strength, fn. #6, p. 115.

than U.S. ballistic missile capabilities. They may well find them less so.¹⁷

C. Impact of U.S. Internal Dissension on American Negotiating Leverage

When reviewing the history of the START negotiations from 1982 to 1983, it is hard to escape the conclusion that frequent reformulations of the U.S. negotiating position and the highly public nature of the inter-agency policymaking process hurt the credibility and tenability of the U.S. bargaining posture. Einhorn notes that:

Because of the public nature of the U.S. defense planning and budgetary process, [the Soviets] have had a fairly good basis for projecting years into the future the U.S. side of the strategic equation.¹⁸

Past experience demonstrates that the Soviets respect tenacious and serious negotiating partners. Yet, several incidents that became public during the START negotiations had a direct impact on Soviet perceptions of U.S. ability to negotiate seriously. These incidents involved both the complexities of the U.S. inter-agency process charged with formulating the U.S. START position as well as congressional debates over funding of the Reagan administration's strategic modernization program. They included the MX funding debate, (December 1982 to January 1983) which forced

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 27

Reagan to make compromises in his START approach, and resulted in a somewhat curtailed MX program.¹⁹ President Reagan eventually had to threaten to recess START if his castigated MX policy were defeated.

Other episodes included the so-called "Rowny memorandum flap," involving a memorandum by the head of the U.S. START team given to Kenneth Adelman in January 1983 and passed by him to his adviser for personnel matters. The memorandum criticized several individuals on the delegation and called into question not only the unity of the U.S. START personnel in Geneva, but also the credibility and support of the head of the delegation.²⁰

Various specific elements of the U.S. negotiating position were subject to considerable public exposure, further eroding the bargaining leverage Washington brought to the talks. A notable example was the public airing of internal Administration disagreement over treatment of throw-weight limitations in START.²¹

¹⁹ See reporting of these episodes in New York Times, 16 Dec. 1982; and Washington Post, 7 Jan. 1983.

²⁰ For a chronology of the "Rowny memorandum flap," see The Arms Control Reporter, March 1983, p. 611.B.81.

²¹ A discussion of the internal U.S. debate over how to handle throw-weight limits in START can be found in Strobe Talbott, Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control, updated edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), pp. 214-221 and 307-311.

The Soviet media often picked up on domestic opposition to Reagan's defense and arms control policies, and it can be assumed that this information figured prominently in Moscow's calculations regarding its START position. For example, in late June or early July 1983, ACDA Director Kenneth Adelman wrote a letter to Senator Charles Percy, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, apparently suggesting a trade of MX for certain Soviet heavy missiles. The Soviets picked up on the hypocrisy of using American missiles that were still in the development stage as bargaining leverage in trade for long-deployed Soviet weapons: "in response to the non-creation of 100 MX missiles, the White House is demanding that the Soviet Union dismantle its ground-launched SS ICBMs [sic]." ²² (emphasis added)

The Soviet article then cites Senator W. Cohen as saying: "I am sure that the Soviet Union will reject this proposal." Senator J. Biden was also cited as stating "Adelman's letter exposes the Administration's stance on this problem. After all, it is stating that we will make certain concessions only if the other side abandons everything." Senator P. Tsongas was also cited to support the conclusion that "people no longer believe that the White

²² A. Tolkunov, "A Poor Grade Not Just in Arithmetic," Pravda, 3 July 1983, p. 5, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 5 July 1983, p. AA 2.

House is sincerely striving for nuclear arms control."²³

The Soviet article also mentions the opposition of a New York Times editorial and concludes by saying:

That is why, having forgotten the basics not only of arithmetic but also of political science, the White House is trying to deceive public opinion by presenting its desire for military superiority as a 'constructive stance.' Such hypocrisy even angers the White House's own legislators.²⁴

Persistent and vocal criticisms of the Administration's START position also hurt its negotiating strength. Accusations that the President lacked seriousness in arms control talks was picked up by the Soviets and certain Administration officials acknowledged the damage to American bargaining leverage.²⁵

It is indisputable that public foreknowledge of American negotiating positions and priorities seriously eroded the U.S. bargaining position in START. Asymmetries in knowing the other side's game plan are a recognized

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. For other examples, see TASS, "Reagan's 'Rearmament' Strategy Attacked," in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 6 July 1983, pp. A6-A7.

²⁵ See observations by Richard Perle in, Hedrick Smith, "Military Aide Says Reagan Critics Damage U.S. Stand in Arms Talks," New York Times, 13 July 1983.

liability for American negotiators.²⁶ This is also a well-appreciated principle of negotiating theory.²⁷

Note that domestic policy turmoil in the United States would be a definite source of Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement, but would also be a definite source of Soviet interest in negotiating strategic arms reductions. Negotiating would be a way of feeding that internal turmoil and disagreement over negotiating positions. Internal consensus must be considered a prerequisite for any democracy succeeding at the negotiating table with an authoritarian system.²⁸

D. Other Factors Affecting the U.S. Bargaining Position in START

It is not difficult to surmise other factors that affected, in the Soviet view, the credibility or seriousness of the U.S. bargaining position in START. These probably included Soviet perceptions of U.S. vulnerabilities and weaknesses in political as well as military terms. Was the

²⁶ For a SALT I example, see William R. Van Cleave, "Political and Negotiating Asymmetries: Insult in SALT," in Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, ed. Contrasting Approaches to Strategic Arms Control, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1974), pp. 14-15.

²⁷ I. William Zartman and Maureen R. Berman, The Practical Negotiator, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1982), pp. 152-153.

²⁸ See comments by Brent Scowcroft in Brad Knickerbocker, "Scowcroft: US Needs Consensus on Arms if it Wants Pact With USSR," Christian Science Monitor, 2 Sept. 1983.

present U.S. administration something the Kremlin had to reckon with on a time-urgent basis? Could the Kremlin wait out U.S. domestic instabilities for a better agreement in the future, perhaps under a different administration?

It is clear that Moscow observers interpreted Reagan's START initiatives in the context of 1984 electioneering. When they did so, they attributed such views to the American media:

Most of American specialists in the sphere of disarmament, the ABC [television company] points out, link the obviously ostentatious activity of the White House in the sphere of restriction [sic] and reduction of strategic armaments with the President's election plans. Such an insincere approach is prompted by purely transient considerations.²⁹

The peace movements in Europe also had an impact on the U.S. START position. This is almost certainly a principal reason for their support by Moscow. For example, the Soviets demonstrated keen appreciation for the impact of the American and West European peace movements on the international environment surrounding NATO efforts to retain cohesiveness on INF modernization issues.³⁰ Some Soviet

²⁹ TASS, 15 July 1983, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 20 July 1983, p. AA2.

³⁰ For representative Soviet articles making such claims, see "Pravda Examines Growing Antiwar Movement," translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 8 Sept. 1982, p. AA9; and, "US Masses Oppose Nuclear Preparations," in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 31 Aug. 1982, pp. AA4-AA5.

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commentators even claimed that the Reagan administration had been forced to "tone down openly aggressive statements," as a direct result of the strength and influence of the peace movements:

Antiwar demonstrations and their influence on the NATO countries' governments are causing increasing concern in bellicose U.S. circles. While seeking to attain aggressive goals, they try to disguise their plans. At times they even have to tone down openly aggressive statements made earlier by high-ranking figures.³¹

The last line probably refers to the Reagan administration's early embroilment with remarks on nuclear war-winning and fighting, which had caused so much furor during the first year of the Administration.³²

A Pravda editorial on the origins and causes of the peace movement made the following assertions regarding the impact of peace movements on American policy:

The U.S. President has made an unexpected 'discovery,' that the citizens of his country 'feel alarm for the fate of their children and the fate of peace.' He expressed concern that Americans are feeling fright and horror of nuclear war.

In the light of the actions of the Washington authorities, should one be surprised that people -- and not only in the United States -- have become more

³¹ Nikolay Prozhogin, "International Review," Pravda, 9 May 1982, p. 4, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 11 May 1982, p. AA9. (pp. AA8-AA11.)

³² For a sensationalist and distorted account of these episodes, see Robert Scheer, With Enough Shovels: Reagan, Bush, and Nuclear War, (New York: Random House, 1982).

alarmed for their own future and that of their children, for the fate of life on earth? No, one should not.

The antinuclear, antiwar movement in the United States emerged spontaneously as a mass protest against militarism. It stems from a realization of the threat to peace posed by Washington's current policy.³³

There is some evidence that the Soviet Union perceived the U.S. as experiencing economic difficulties in the early 1980s during the START negotiations. Georgiy Arbatov, considered the Kremlin's top U.S. observer and analyst, refers to American citizens as too "preoccupied with economic troubles and the increased nuclear danger" to heed President Reagan's exhortations to not be afraid of "heroic dreams."³⁴ This may have been another element of Soviet calculations regarding the vulnerabilities of the U.S. bargaining position in START.

In meetings with Soviet officials, Western journalists reported that the Soviets believed mounting unemployment, inflation, and high interest rates to be among domestic problems plaguing the United States. These Soviet officials suggested that the "arms race" was an obstacle to resolving these difficulties: "Both sides face practical

³³ "The Peoples' Will Must Be Reckoned With," Pravda, 25 Nov. 1982, p. 6, translated in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 26 Nov. 1982, p. AA5.

³⁴ Georgiy Arbatov, "American Policy in the Dreamland," Pravda, 16 July 1982, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 19 July 1982, p. A1. (pp. A1-A5.)

problems whose solutions are likely to be deflected by the arms race."³⁵ Other Soviet spokesmen urged "common sense" as a basis for Reagan's arms control policies in the face of alleged economic and foreign policy failures.³⁶

Soviet objections to Rowny as head of the U.S. delegation almost certainly represented a smokescreen for Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement. At the very least, these Soviet objections were unconstructive and unbecoming a diplomatic exchange. Soviet correspondent O. Nikiforov quoted a German periodical, the Frankfurter Rundschau, as termming Rowny "simply a militant anticommunist who doubts that there is any expediency in an agreement with Moscow."³⁷ Soviet "political observer" Valentin Zorin made the following remarks several months into the START negotiations:

I must tell you, comrade viewers, that I personally had grave doubts as to whether Washington really wanted to make progress at the Geneva talks the moment I read that the head of the American delegation to these talks was to be Edward Rowny. . . .

³⁵ Howard Simons and Dusko Doder, "Soviet Officials Pessimistic About Improving Relations With U.S.," Washington Post, 26 Oct. 1981.

³⁶ Georgi Arbatov, "The U.S. -- Will There Be Changes?" Pravda, 17 March 1983, pp. 4-5, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, vol. 35, no. 11 (13 April 1983), pp. 1-4.

³⁷ O. Nikiforov, "At the Geneva Crossroads," Komsomolskaya Pravda, 23 Sept. 1982, p. 3, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 30 Sept. 1982, p. AA5.

He was included as a military specialist in the American delegation to the Soviet-American talks on the SALT II treaty. However, General Rowny made use of his appointment to the American delegation not to facilitate the achievement of agreement but to sabotage it . . . Edward Rowny played a very ignoble part in burying the SALT II treaty.³⁸

Soviet commentary on this issue must be regarded as unworthy of serious negotiators. It had no bearing on the substance of the talks, and Rowny faithfully discharged the directives given him by President Reagan. His appointment as head of the U.S. START delegation was no doubt intended to signal the Soviets concerning the Administration's resolve to engage in hard bargaining. There is no question, though, that Rowny's presence at the head of the START negotiating team provoked domestic criticism of the Administration's sincerity.³⁹ Here again, the Soviets appeared to have parroted internal American dissatisfaction, turning it against the Administration and undermining the U.S. bargaining position.

II. THE SOVIET BARGAINING POSITION IN START

³⁸ Valentin Zorin, "The World Today," Moscow Domestic Television Service, 5 Oct. 1982, in Daily Report: Soviet Union, FBIS, 6 Oct. 1982, p. AA

³⁹ Strobe Talbott has implied that Rowny's presence served as a deterrent to Soviet acceptance of the 'double build-down' proposal in the fall of 1983. See Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control, (New York: Knopf, 1984), p. 342 fn.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, calculations of bargaining leverage will always be relative in several ways. For example, trade-offs must be considered between one's own programs and those of an opponent. The foregoing section has examined a number of aspects of the U.S. bargaining position that tended to undermine either the credibility and seriousness of the U.S. government, or that left the U.S. in a poor negotiating position relative to units of limitation under discussion in START. This section examines the bargaining leverage position from the point of view of Soviet systems, and the willingness of the leadership in Moscow to accept limits or reductions on their own systems in return for limits or reductions in U.S. weapons.

A START agreement that involved substantial reductions in land-based ICBMs would have made a significant contribution to strategic stability by reducing the ability of either side to execute a disarming first strike. Since the Soviet side was the only one with such a capability at the time of the START negotiations (and a more destabilizing situation could hardly be imagined), this necessarily meant that a disproportionate reduction would have to be made in Soviet offensive nuclear strength.

The Soviets were uninterested in a START agreement that would have seriously impinged on the military's ability to carry out its primary war-time missions, which involve

the possibility of preemptive counterforce strikes on the nuclear assets of an opponent who appears to be on the verge of mounting an attack against the Soviet homeland. The Soviet military had, by the beginning of START in 1982, essentially achieved their principal objectives relative to strategic nuclear force requirements. The strategic balance favored the Soviet Union, especially in those indices considered necessary by the Soviets to fight and win a nuclear war. Two factors were operative in helping them achieve this state of affairs: (1) U.S. inaction, particularly in the area of strategic defenses, but also in terms of offensive force modernization; and (2) Soviet action, both in terms of offensive nuclear power and strategic defenses.

SALT was a key element in the first factor in two ways -- by placing bounds on the U.S. strategic nuclear force program, and by not restricting those systems the Soviets felt essential to deterrence as they perceived it. SALT inhibited U.S. strategic nuclear force modernization not only by explicit limits on the number of new ICBM systems permitted, but also by restricting ABM deployments (and thereby perpetuating an illusion of Soviet moderation in accordance with the MAD philosophy of finite deterrence and mutual societal vulnerability), and proscribing several alternative approaches to strategic nuclear force

survivability.⁴⁰ This is the desired objective from the Soviet point of view

. . . the Soviet Union has consistently approached SALT as a unified actor with a well-developed sense of strategic purpose. The Soviets have never regarded arms control as an alternative to unilateral defense investments (as many U.S. SALT enthusiasts tend to have done) but rather have treated it as a direct adjunct of their national security planning.⁴¹ (emphasis added)

Benjamin Lambeth has developed the theme that Soviet objectives in arms control often emphasize placing disproportionate restrictions on U.S. systems, while leaving key Soviet systems relatively unrestricted. He has argued that Soviet arms control goals

. . . have been motivated by a self-interested desire to bring U.S. force planning into an explicit negotiating context that might allow Soviet planners to impose constraints on U.S. strategic programs, while at the same time exacting American acceptance of countervailing Soviet programs and pursuing whatever margin of strategic advantage the traffic of SALT and détente might allow. In this sense, Moscow's arms control policy has not only been consonant with Soviet defense planning but indeed has constituted an integral part of it, aimed at helping achieve -- to the maximum extent possible -- Soviet strategic goals cheaply through negotiation rather than through the more costly avenue of unrestrained arms competition.⁴²

⁴⁰ Conceptually, there are several ways to insure the survivability of land-based forces. These forces can be hardened, dispersed, mobilized, defended, or concealed. Of these, only hardening is not expressly forbidden or discouraged by arms control agreements and considerations.

⁴¹ Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Arms Control and Defense Planning in Soviet Strategic Policy." in Richard Burt, ed., Arms Control and Defense Postures in the 1980s, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1982), p. 61.

⁴² Ibid.

Later in this same article, Lambeth more explicitly makes the point that arms control is subordinate to Soviet defense planning requirements:

. . . the net effect on SALT created by this Soviet propensity to rely on unilateral initiatives rather than on negotiated measures for assuring Soviet security has been a clear Soviet determination to use arms control in support of Soviet strategic goals. Seen from this perspective, SALT has proven for the Soviets to be a lucrative means for seeking to impose constraints on American exploitation of military technology while providing a context for continuing the development and operational application of Soviet military technology with the express blessings of the United States, as reflected in the formal language of whatever agreements that Soviet negotiating finesse can help bring about. For Soviet planners, SALT has not been an exercise in 'arms control' at all. Instead, to bend the idiom of Clausewitz somewhat, it has been a continuation of strategy by other means.⁴³

The second factor -- Soviet unilateral actions to modernize and expand its strategic nuclear forces -- took place both within and without the legal parameters of existing strategic arms limitation agreements. Soviet actions sanctioned by SALT included maximizing the number of ICBMs, SLBMs, and MIRVed launchers permitted.

According to Robert Einhorn:

The [Soviet] planning process seems to be carried out independently of arms control considerations, without counting on successful negotiations to help solve critical security problems. . . . arms control has tended to have a marginal impact on Soviet forces and plans as a consequence of a Soviet strategic mindset that places paramount importance on unilateral defense programs in achieving vital security objectives and of a

⁴³ Ibid., pp. 64-65.

Soviet planning system that makes ongoing programs difficult to alter.⁴⁴

Soviet actions on the fringes of (or beyond) treaty obligations included the large-scale deployment of the SS-20 missile (whose characteristics place it just below the threshold for intercontinental systems accountable in SALT), and continued development of new types of ICBMs, as well as preparing the base for a nation-wide ABM defense.⁴⁵

A new agreement on strategic arms was not essential to maintaining Soviet satisfaction with the strategic balance at the beginning of START. All that was necessary to perpetuating the contribution of arms control to Soviet military requirements was ensuring continued U.S. adherence to the SALT I and II agreements. This could be done by threatening to call off on-going negotiations if the President seemed about to commit the U.S. to punitive sanctions.

The Soviet Union had to preempt the possibility that the Reagan administration would end American compliance with the SALT I and II agreements by keeping alive the prospect of progress in arms control. This was accomplished by

⁴⁴ Robert J. Einhorn, Negotiating From Strength: Leverage in U.S.-Soviet Arms Control Negotiations, (New York: Praeger, 1985), pp. 43, 45.

⁴⁵ Both of these are discussed in President Reagan's most recent Soviet noncompliance report, see U.S. Department of State, Soviet Noncompliance With Arms Control Agreements, Special Report No. 163, March 1987.

participating in U.S.-Soviet negotiations even though, for a variety of reasons, there was little Soviet interest in an actual agreement.

The involvement of the Soviet military in the formulation and implementation of Soviet START policy insured that the START negotiations would conform, above all, to the interests and requirements of Soviet military doctrine.

Since the late 1950s, the Soviet Union has sought meaningful strategic superiority in terms of what is now called prompt, hard-target kill capability. This capability resides primarily in large, accurate ICBMs. Soviet objectives for accumulating prompt, hard-target kill capability are two-fold. First, by possessing such capability the Soviet Union hopes to deter the West from initiating nuclear war. Second, if for whatever reason, the Soviet Union should fail in deterring the West, it wants the capability of limiting damage to the Soviet homeland while completely destroying the West's ability to continue waging war. These reasons were recognized by Western scholars as long ago as 1958, along with a third reason:

If the Soviet Union should continue to gain technologically while the NATO alliance made little progress, the Soviet Union would be able to make war without fear of the consequences. It will be difficult to attain the ability to eliminate the opponent's nuclear striking forces in a single blow. But that is the goal which the Soviet leaders must strain to reach. If they should acquire such preponderant military strength, they would have policy alternatives even more

attractive than the initiation of nuclear war. By flaunting presumably invincible strength, the Soviet Union could compel piecemeal capitulation of the democracies. This prospect must indeed seem glittering to the Soviet leaders.⁴⁶

An appreciation for the difficulties involved in seeking nuclear preponderance illustrates the critical role that arms control negotiations and agreements can make in helping the Soviets achieve their goal of nuclear hegemony. The Soviets faced a series of problems in achieving meaningful nuclear superiority over the United States, including the difficulty of eliminating the consequences of a retaliatory blow. Also, even if "preponderance" was achieved, capitulation on the part of the West would only be forthcoming if: (1) the Soviet Union was clearly perceived as having preponderance, and (2) the West chose to respond to such a perception of Soviet preponderance by capitulation rather than unilateral strategic initiatives.

Prior to SALT there were two episodes where the significance of Soviet strategic breakthroughs were neutralized and defeated by the Western reaction -- the Soviet detonation of an atomic bomb several years prior to expectations together with the subsequent development of a deliverable hydrogen bomb before the West could itself produce such a weapon, and the Soviet production of

⁴⁶ Herbert S. Dinerstein, "The Revolution in Soviet Strategic Thinking," Foreign Affairs, 36, 2 (Oct. '58): 252. 241-52.

intercontinental-range ballistic missiles in the late 1950s. Both these eras produced successful large-scale U.S. efforts to catch up and overcome the Soviet developments.

For the Soviet Union, the question became: In the future, how could it ensure that the West responded by 'capitulation' rather than 'arms racing'? Prior to the commencement of SALT in 1968, the Soviet Union must have reached some preliminary answers to this question. Among these were undertaking efforts to mask and obscure the level of its strategic nuclear weapons program, and to create pressures in the West for 'arms control' responses, rather than 'arms racing' responses. The Soviet Union proceeded to implement both by way of SALT negotiations.⁴⁷

Following SALT I, U.S. analysts began calling attention to Soviet strategic weapons buildup and Soviet war-fighting doctrine to show that the ABM Treaty did not mean that the Soviet's had accepted MAD. Such insight damaged Soviet strategic deception efforts:

The Soviet Union responded quickly. It first muted or deleted the most explicit references to its nuclear weapons policies. This was followed by a public campaign by its political leadership and by the social science institutes of the Academy of Sciences aimed at

⁴⁷ Two highly recommendable sources in particular develop these themes in greater detail: John J. Ballantine, "Arms Negotiations: Soviet Path to Power?" International Security Review, 6, 4 (Winter 1981-1982): 519-532; and, Capt. George H. Selden (USA), SALT: The Soviet Approach to Strategic Superiority, Student Research Report (Garmisch, Germany: U.S. Army Russian Institute, 1978).

discrediting the view that it possessed a nuclear warfighting strategy.⁴⁸

Soviet conceptions of "stability" and stabilizing versus destabilizing weapons shed further light on Soviet military objectives in START, with particular reference to Soviet willingness to negotiate limits or reductions in its own systems.

For example, in START the Soviets heavily criticized the American claim that Soviet large land-based ICBMs were destabilizing. The reason these missiles were not destabilizing, according to Soviet sources, was because "these missiles are immobile," and "their deployment areas are well-known and it would not be too much of a problem to destroy them."⁴⁹ The argument here is that they are not destabilizing because they can be easily destroyed in a first-strike. This curious Soviet logic betrays Soviet strategic intentions. It is precisely because they can be easily destroyed in a first-strike that they are considered destabilizing by Western strategic analysts. Yet it is their disarming first-strike qualities that recommend them to the Soviet military. The Soviet Union has resisted

⁴⁸ See William C. Green, Soviet Disinformation and Strategic Deception Concerning Its Nuclear Weapons Policy, (Arlington, VA: Science Applications International, Inc. Feb. 1984). The quote is from the title page summary.

⁴⁹ From commentary by Col. Eduard Grigoriyev, Soviet broadcast in English to North America, 12 July 1982, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 13 July 1982, p. AA10.

restrictions on its ICBM modernization in every major U.S.-Soviet strategic weapons negotiation since SALT I.⁵⁰

The Soviet commentary cited in the foregoing paragraph continues by applying the term "destabilizing" to U.S. ballistic missile submarines, which the Soviets consider a major source of strategic instability.⁵¹ It is ironic that the Soviets define bombers and cruise missiles as destabilizing, since these systems have always recommended themselves to U.S. analysts precisely for their stabilizing features (slow flight times, recallability, etc.).

In addition to criticism of U.S. SLBM forces, the Soviets seemed to place a great deal of emphasis on criticizing cruise missiles as destabilizing in their view. In labelling the cruise missile destabilizing, Soviet commentaries cited several characteristics. Among these were the relative size of its warhead, its economical suitability for large-scale production, its small size, and its interchangeable warhead:

First of all, the cruise missile is a powerful weapon that equals in its striking capacity about 15 or 17 bombs dropped on Hiroshima or Nagasaki. It is not so costly as other weapons and can therefore easily be put in serial production. Its small size allows making its

⁵⁰ Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Arms Control and Defense Planning in Soviet Strategic Policy," in Richard Burt, ed., Arms Control Postures for the 1980s, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 66-69.

⁵¹ Ibid.

production, storage, and transportation secret so that no means of international control can spot the place of deployment of such missiles and their real numbers. And finally, this is a missile that can be equipped with various charges.⁵²

This commentary continues by citing five more features of cruise missiles which the Soviets find destabilizing, including a dismissal of the U.S. assertion that the slow speed of the cruise missile renders it unsuitable for traditional first-strike targets:

First of all, with the accumulation of nuclear arsenals the first-strike concept itself has changed. Today first-strike targets include not only objectives capable of changing their location in one way or another but also objectives that cannot be hidden from a first-strike attack even in a matter of hours, and the speed of a missile in this case is of secondary importance. Secondly, cruise missiles can be moved very close to the frontier, which Washington intends to do, planning to start deploying 464 cruise missiles in Western Europe as of December this year.

Thirdly, cruise missiles can be launched by different launching devices, and thanks to that they can fly over different trajectories which makes their timely detection difficult. Fourthly, their altitude is very low and on the strength of this factor they can be spotted, despite their slow speed, only as they approach the warning radars. And finally, the United States is now working on the development of supersonic cruise missiles. All the above listed factors make cruise missiles an extremely destabilizing weapon.⁵³

⁵² Commentary by Aleksey Vasiliyev, Soviet broadcast in English to North America, 5 Oct. 1983, Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 7 Oct. 1983, p. AA3.

⁵³ Ibid., p. AA4.

These comments on the destabilizing features of U.S. cruise missiles suggest that the Soviet concept of a destabilizing weapon is one that the Soviet military cannot easily preempt.

Limits and restrictions on cruise missiles figured prominently in Soviet START proposals.

A. The Contribution of Arms Control to Soviet Military Requirements

Arms control makes a significant, but still only limited contribution to Soviet military requirements. The nature of this contribution can be illustrated by the role of SALT in Soviet military strategy. According to Richard Pipes, SALT has been "a device to inhibit the United States response to Soviet long-term strategic programs."⁵⁴ In addition, Pipes also notes that SALT has the following benefits from the Soviet military's point of view:⁵⁵

-- SALT "fixes the number of United States systems and thereby facilitates the task of estimating what is required to render them harmless."

-- "SALT alleviates the Soviet Union's recurrent nightmare that an American technological achievement (such as ABM or the cruise missile have been in the past) should suddenly neutralize the ponderous and incremental Soviet buildup."

⁵⁴ Richard Pipes, "Why the Soviet Union Wants SALT II," in Charles Tyroler, II, ed., Alerting America: The Papers of the Committee on the Present Danger, (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984), p. 168.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

-- "SALT serves to create in the United States a political atmosphere obstructive to defense expenditures. . . [by persuading] much of the American public that any improvements in strategic forces are 'destabilizing'."

All these features of SALT are inherently beneficial to the Soviet Union. It likes to depict SALT as the lynchpin of détente, as it depicts détente as the only alternative to nuclear holocaust.

An analysis of Soviet military doctrine and its relationship to Soviet military force procurement showed that the following requirements would be needed in order to fulfill Soviet security objectives:⁵⁶

- 1) preemptive counterforce capability against enemy nuclear forces;
- 2) sufficient weapons to cover all other military and defense industrial targets;
- 3) large, secure reserve forces;
- 4) active air defenses against both the high and low altitude bomber threat;
- 5) ballistic missile defenses;
- 6) strategic ASW forces capable of attacking open ocean U.S. SSBNs as well as protecting Soviet SSBNs (both those that forward deployed and those in defended bastions);
- 7) ASAT capability;
- 8) a survivable C2 network;
- 9) improved reconnaissance and early warning; and,

⁵⁶ Derived from Mark E. Miller, Soviet Strategic Power and Doctrine: The Quest for Superiority, (Advanced International Studies Institute, 1982), p. 149.

- 10) an expansion and strengthening of civil defense for the protection of the political-military leadership, elements of the work force essential to postwar economic recovery, and the general population.

Of all these capabilities, arms control in general has a direct bearing on only a few.

Soviet strategic objectives at the time of the START negotiations included the following elements, according to Alfred Monks:⁵⁷

- (1) deterrence of war where the survival of the U.S.S.R. and its socialist allies in Europe and Asia is at stake;
- (2) prevention of the formation of a cohesive, anti-Soviet bloc;
- (3) retention of adequate military forces to survive and, if possible, to win a war if deterrence fails;
- (4) an unabated military buildup in order to reduce the West's, principally America's, political, economic, and military influence in all areas of the world; and,
- (5) matching the strategic and tactical military power of the forces perceived as opposing Soviet foreign policy objectives.

Negotiations on strategic arms reductions helped make substantial contributions to all of the above objectives. Monks later says: "the Soviets are convinced their security

⁵⁷ Alfred L. Monks, Soviet Military Doctrine: 1960 to the Present, (New York: Irvington, 1984), p. 236.

requires that they match the strategic and tactical military power of a large bloc of imperialist states."⁵⁸

Thomas W. Wolfe has noted that several schools of thought exist on the nature of Soviet civil-military relations, but the one he appears partial to is that perspective which

. . . contends that there is what amounts to a division of labor or cooperative partnership between them, with the political leadership tending to delegate authority for the professional side of national security planning to the military while reserving to itself the right of final decision, especially on matters involving large resources or issues of war and peace.⁵⁹

Wolfe cites two factors minimizing civil-military conflict among Soviet elites. One is an unwritten rule that "support for competing policy positions is not to be sought outside the elite family itself."⁶⁰ The other is the fact that, while differing perspectives may at times be discernible on specific issues, Soviet political and military leaders share a common perception of the larger national security objectives and the manner in which they should be addressed.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Monks, Soviet Military Doctrine: 1960 to the Present, p. 241.

⁵⁹ Thomas W. Wolfe, The SALT Experience, (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1979), p. 72.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 72.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 72-73.

There are two schools of thought on the extent to which the Soviet military supported Soviet participation in SALT. One holds that the military was initially reluctant to engage in substantive strategic arms negotiations with the United States. Wolfe is representative of this point of view. He has noted that: "With regard to SALT itself, the attitude of the Soviet military was wary from the beginning; indeed, the military had evidently been reluctant to enter the talks at all."⁶²

Whatever the degree of initial support the Soviet military gave the political leadership at the beginning of SALT in 1968, both schools of thought acknowledge that the Soviet military quickly assumed a dominant position in determining and implementing Soviet strategic arms control policy. On this score Wolfe says:

throughout SALT I and at least much of SALT II, the military leadership has exerted a strong, conservative influence on the negotiations, and that the political leadership -- whatever its own bent may have been -- has tended to eschew agreements that, in the judgment of the military professionals, might adversely affect the Soviet military posture.⁶³

B. The Soviet Strategic Nuclear Force Modernization Effort

Soviet strategic nuclear force programs demonstrate unequivocally that the Soviet Union is prepared to secure its defense requirements by unilateral actions involving the

⁶² Ibid., p. 75.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 76.

accumulation of overwhelming military power, without the assistance of negotiated arms control agreements if need be.

When the United States entered the SALT negotiations in 1968, its strategic weapons programs had been fulfilled and the United States was not adding quantitatively to its nuclear stockpile. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, was building strategic nuclear forces at a steady and impressive rate. Thus the United States entered the negotiations with a disadvantage in terms of dynamic bargaining leverage.

The United States entered the START negotiations in only a slightly better position. In one respect, the U.S. was worse off. It had fallen seriously behind in most important indices of the strategic balance, including those to be negotiated in START.⁶⁴ In another respect, the Reagan administration was determined to correct that situation. But there were serious questions about whether the Administration was doing enough.

Prior to the beginning of START the Soviet Union had amassed a formidable strategic nuclear arsenal, posing a significant risk to America's nuclear deterrent. This problem was known as the "window of vulnerability," and was an important strategic rationale for Reagan's approach to START (i.e. calling for sharp cuts in Soviet heavy ICBMs).

⁶⁴ See Chapter Five on bargaining leverage.

According to official Soviet sources, the 1983 budget for military expenditures was 17.05 billion rubles, or 4.8 percent of the Soviet government's total budget.⁶⁵

According to the Defense Department's 1983 version of Soviet Military Power, between late 1981 and March 1983, the Soviet Union:⁶⁶

-- began flight testing of two new land-based ICBMs;

-- continued modernization of deployed ICBMs (SS-17, 18, and 19);

-- began flight testing of a new generation of strategic, manned bombers (Blackjack);

-- commenced flight testing of new generations of ground-sea- and air-launched cruise missiles with nuclear capability and ranges in excess of 1,600 kilometers;

-- test fired MIRVed, 8,300 kilometer range, submarine-launched ballistic missiles with nuclear-warhead capability; and

-- launched a second Typhoon-class SSBN.

The 1983 version of Soviet Military Power makes clear that the Soviet Union was determined to complete nuclear

⁶⁵ "Following the Road of Peace and Creation," Pravda, 1 Dec. 1982, p. 1, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 1 Dec. 1982, p. CC2.

⁶⁶ Department of Defense, Soviet Military Power, March 1983, p. 1.

force programs dating from the 1970s as well as initiate new efforts to obtain strategic objectives:

Much of what the Soviets have done since September 1981 involves the consummation of programs begun in the 1970s and offers the first signs of new programs designed to help remedy weaknesses still remaining and to allow them to attain their own strategic objectives in the face of prospective Western programs.⁶⁷

Soviet strategic programs that were nearing completion during the START negotiations involved improvements to strategic offensive forces, strategic defensive forces, and strategic command and control elements. Specifically, they included:⁶⁸

-- replacement of older missiles with SS-19 Mod 3 and SS-18 Mod 4 MIRVed ICBMs;

-- construction of Delta II SSBNs, fitted with 16 SS-N-18 MIRVed SLBMs, with Yankee and Hotel SSBNs dismantled to remain within the SALT II limits for SSBNs;

-- continuation of the SS-NX-20 MIRVed SLBM testing program (which became operational during the START negotiations);

-- continued production of Backfire bombers;

-- further deployment of SA-10 low-altitude SAMs around Moscow and throughout the USSR;

-- initial production of the Il-76 Mainstay airborne warning and control system (the Soviet equivalent of the American AWACS);

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

-- continued development of a high-speed ABM interceptor and a modified version of the older Galosh ABM interceptor;

-- additional construction of large phased-array radars around the periphery of the USSR; and,

-- continued construction of hardened shelters and command posts for passive defense.

New programs started since late 1981, just prior to the beginning of INF and START negotiations were intended to improve Soviet nuclear forces in terms of quantity, quality and survivability. They included:⁶⁹

-- first tests of a new solid-propellant ICBM similar in size and payload to the U.S. MX ICBM;

-- preparations to begin testing other new ICBMs;

-- development of a series of long-range cruise missiles intended for ground, air and sea launch platforms;

-- preparations to begin testing another new SLBM;

-- the first flight tests of the new Blackjack strategic bomber;

-- new ABM deployment around Moscow to include a new, very large phased-array radar and deployment of new ABM interceptors;

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 18.

- testing of high-energy laser systems for land-based and sea-based air defense;
- testing of a mobile version of the SA-10 SAM system;
- the initial deployment of the Foxhound interceptor (designed to identify and track slower-flying cruise missiles); and,
- testing of two additional new air defense interceptor aircraft.

Quantitative improvements included "a dramatic increase in the number of deliverable nuclear warheads as the MIRVed versions of the fourth generation (SS-17, SS-18, and SS-19) have been deployed." Although there was a reduction in the number of Soviet SALT-accountable launchers, the number of deployed ICBM nuclear warheads increased by a factor of four.⁷⁰ Qualitative improvements included upgrading the accuracy and throw-weight capabilities of new ICBMs (giving the newer versions hard-target kill capability), and developing rapid reload capabilities. Survivability improvements involved hardening the silos that launch Soviet ICBMs, and development of mobile launching systems to make detection and targeting difficult for enemy attacks.⁷¹

C. The Military in Soviet START Policy

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 19.

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 20-21. See also Robert P. Berman and John C. Baker, Soviet Strategic Forces: Requirements and Responses, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1982), pp. 65-67.

In reviewing the public record of Soviet START diplomacy, it is clear that the Soviet military retained the dominant role they had staked out in the SALT negotiations. For example, Soviet Minister of Defense D. F. Ustinov played a prominent role in extolling Soviet arms control policies during the START negotiations.⁷² The ubiquitous presence of the Soviet military, both in what is known of Soviet arms control decisionmaking in general, and on the Soviet START delegation in particular, ensured that the direction of the talks did not impinge on basic Soviet nuclear force requirements.

Soviet military objectives in START can be derived from reviewing Soviet threat perceptions. Soviet threats of retaliatory arms initiatives in response to U.S. weapon deployment plans are also a valuable source of evidence for Soviet military objectives in START.⁷³ There were two distinguishable classes of Soviet military objectives in START. The first were those related to perpetuating the SALT regime of the 1970s. These objectives included relatively high ceilings on strategic nuclear launchers,

⁷² See, for example, Marshal of the Soviet Union D. F. Ustinov, "Mighty Factor of Peace and the People's Security," Pravda, 23 Feb. 1983, p. 2, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 23 Feb. 1983, pp. AA1-AA6.

⁷³ For an example of retaliatory deployment threats, see Ustinov in FBIS 1 Aug. 83, AA1-4.

high levels of allowable warheads, vague modernization parameters for new ICBMs, loose verification provisions, protection for Soviet heavy ICBM assets, and restrictions on U.S. ABM activities. Many of these objectives were reflected in the Soviet START position, which in turn reflected Soviet expectations of a follow-on 'SALT III'-type agreement. The essence of this position was to preserve and perpetuate the military gains of SALT I and II.

Perhaps the most important Soviet military objective in START had nothing to do with weapons being negotiated by the START delegations. This was NATO INF deployments. As previously discussed, the primary Soviet military concern was forestalling deployments of American Pershing IIs and GLCMs in Europe where their presence would legitimize the American commitment to NATO Europe and symbolize North Atlantic solidarity at the expense of Soviet political influence in Europe. Knowing that the Americans' greatest concern was resolution of issues raised in START, the Soviets used that as leverage in seeking cancellation of NATO INF modernization by making progress in START dependent on U.S. forthcomingness in the INF talks.

The resolution of INF issues had always figured prominently in Soviet expectations of SALT III as a follow-on set of negotiations and agreements to SALT II. Witness the following quotation:

When SALT I and II were being negotiated, our position was to take all factors into consideration: The U.S. forward-based systems in Europe, the nuclear means of countries other than the USSR and the United States -- France, Britain, and China -- and the geographical position of each. Thus the USSR, some of whose ports are frozen in winter, was allowed to have a larger number of submarines than the Americans. Faced with the Americans' opposition to discussing their "forward-based systems," we agreed to discuss them only in SALT III. Finally, since we had reached agreement on significantly reducing strategic arms, and with a view to SALT III, the role of the medium-range weapons became more important.⁷⁴

New concerns for the Soviet military had arisen during and after the negotiation of SALT II. The second class of Soviet military objectives in START included U.S. military programs and policies not resolved in SALT. The most important of these was, of course, NATO INF modernization efforts, referred to be the Soviets as "FBS" or Forward Based Systems.⁷⁵ This had been a perpetual concern for Moscow since prior to SALT I and the Soviets expected a definitive arms control resolution of their concerns in a SALT III agreement. Other major Soviet objectives for a post-SALT II agreement included maintaining and perpetuating the correlation of forces as it existed at the beginning of START. This also included heading off any challenges from new American technology.

⁷⁴ Jean-Louis Arnaud, "Interview with Soviet General Yuriy Lebedev [in Moscow]," Le Matin, 20 July 1983, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 25 July 1983, p. AA1.

⁷⁵ See Chapter Four for a detailed discussion of Soviet threat perceptions of NATO INF.

In September 1982, Maj. Gen. Viktor Starodubov, the General Staff representative on the Soviet START delegation, gave a three hour "interview" to members of the Western press in which he stressed several principal objectives the Soviets had been pursuing in Geneva.⁷⁶ These objectives reflected Moscow's post-SALT II concerns. They were:

- (1) to place limits on U.S. cruise missile developments;
- (2) to insure that British and French independent nuclear forces were counted against the U.S. strategic total;
- (3) to impose limits on other U.S. strategic developments of concern to the Soviet Union, namely the Ohio-class nuclear ballistic missile submarine; and,
- (4) to stress the Soviet Union's commitment to "equality and equal security" as the basis for any U.S.-Soviet agreement.

The Soviets did not hesitate to use blandishments during the START negotiations to discourage the development of modern American nuclear weapons. Connected with this tactic was the Soviet call for a freeze on the development and deployment of new strategic systems while the talks were being held.

With regard to the MX missile, for example, the Soviets threatened to respond in kind by deploying a missile of similar features:

⁷⁶ Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert Asks Nuclear Balance," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982.

The true purpose of deploying the MX is to achieve U.S. military superiority over the USSR. But this importunate desire is nothing more than the result of self-hypnosis. Nothing will come of it. As was stated quite clearly not long ago, the Soviet Union will be forced to respond to the American Administration's challenge by deploying a new ICBM of the same class,⁷⁷ and its characteristics will not be inferior to the MX.⁷⁷

This was clearly a disingenuous position. U.S. or Soviet strategic requirements ostensibly do not require matching the other side's systems one-for-one, at least that is the argument Soviet authors preach to American negotiators. The Soviet emphasis on deploying a system matching exactly the features of the MX was obviously intended to dramatize and substantiate the Soviet claim that the U.S. was driving an action-reaction "arms race." Further demonstrating the disingenuousness of the above comments is the fact that the Soviets were then already in the process of developing and deploying a system of the characteristics of the MX missile -- the SS-24.⁷⁸

Apparently in response to U.S. reluctance to accept Soviet proposals on cruise missiles, Starodubov emphasized the importance of limiting U.S. cruise missile programs as a quid pro quo for reductions in heavy missiles. The newspaper account of this talk quotes him as saying that "no

⁷⁷ V. Sukhoy, "At Your Request: MX -- A Weapon of Aggression," Pravda, 25 Jan. 1983, p. 5, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 27 Jan. 1983, p. AA7.

⁷⁸ See Soviet Military Power, 1983 edition, p. 2; and 1984 edition, p. 4.

arms control agreement 'will be of any value' if the United States starts a cruise missile race while seeking reduction in the number of heavy missiles." Cruise missiles were cited as a new weapon technology where the U.S. was seeking to gain unilateral advantages. Starodubov stated:

Security is our highest interest. We think it is dangerous if the United States is superior in some types of arms. The Americans could exploit superiority for political purposes, and from that, it would not be a long way to conflict.

We have always been following the United States on the arms issue. History shows that the Soviet Union has never been superior to the United States in strategic arms.⁷⁹

Here again, the Soviets were trying to emphasize the importance of preventing the United States from breaching the existing strategic 'equilibrium' and seeking strategic superiority.

Certain U.S. analysts felt the Soviet Union would try to eliminate ground-launched cruise missiles intended for deployment in Europe altogether, while banning or severely limiting sea-launched cruise missiles, and placing restrictions on air-launched cruise missiles. Apparently Moscow's proposed warhead limit in START would count 3,800 prospective U.S. air- and sea-launched cruise missiles.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert Asks Nuclear Balance."

⁸⁰ Leslie Gelb, "The Cruise Missile: Preventing New Arms Race With U.S. Is Seen as Key Soviet Goal in Geneva,"

With regard to nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), Starodubov indicated that the Soviets had proposed a ban on Ohio and Typhoon class submarines, but that the United States had rejected it. It is not clear whether he was referring to a proposal made during the course of the SALT II negotiations, or to a proposal made in START, but it was most probably a reference to a SALT II proposal to include SLBMs in the "new type" restriction on ballistic missile development. The Soviets rejected including SLBMs in that restriction and ultimately proposed exempting SLBMs from modernization limits altogether.⁸¹

Starodubov, according to this report, "said the basic Soviet policy was peace and a stable balance," and "he repeatedly insisted that the Soviet Union sought only a balance in strategic weapons." The report ends with this quote from Starodubov's interview: "If a state has a policy of peace, it will never seek superiority. It is a dangerous madness to count on victory."⁸²

Another Soviet military objective in START was demonstrating the Soviet commitment to "equality and equal security" by promoting détente and negotiated solutions to

New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982. See also a 'news analysis' based largely on the same presentation by Maj. Gen. Viktor Starodubov in Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert," New York Times, 2 Sept. 1982.

⁸¹ See Strobe Talbott, Endgame, pp. 161-163.

⁸² Flora Lewis, "Soviet Arms-Control Expert," NYT, 2 Sept. 1982.

issues of East-West concern. The primary value of this objective, in the view of the Soviet military, was to inhibit public and congressional support for nuclear weapons modernization programs in the United States by portraying them as upsetting the correlation of forces, undermining détente, and wrecking prospects for negotiated arms control outcomes.

III. SOVIET ATTITUDES TOWARDS CONSTRAINTS ON THEIR OWN SYSTEMS

The foregoing discussion illustrates the point that the Soviets were far more concerned about either restricting certain U.S. programs or pursuing objectives not directly related to the substance of the START negotiations. But what about Soviet attitudes towards proposed constraints on their own weapon systems?

Robert Einhorn has published one of the more recent examinations of this question, and finds that some Soviet systems may simply be non-negotiable:

Why have they never offered to reduce their 308 heavy ICBMs for some price -- even an outlandish price? . . . It seems that the Soviets were less interested in pursuing such deals than in retaining the forces deemed necessary to perform a central Soviet strategic mission. What this may demonstrate is that, at any given time, certain elements of the Soviet force structure may simply not be negotiable -- at least not at any price that the United States would conceivably be willing to pay.⁸³

⁸³ Negotiating from Strength, pp. 49-50.

Einhorn firmly asserts that the basic Soviet inclination is "to forgo limitations on the United States if such limitations would involve trading away capabilities needed to achieve critical Soviet strategic objectives,"⁸⁴ and determines that those capabilities reside primarily in heavy ICBMs (SS-18s). In addition to a discussion of Soviet reluctance to subject its hard-target kill capabilities (in the form of heavy ICBMs) to negotiation, Einhorn finds three other areas of Soviet reticence, some of which are related to constraints on Soviet hard-target capabilities. As Einhorn states:⁸⁵

- 1) "Soviet negotiators have vigorously opposed U.S. proposals in SALT and START that would have altered significantly their preferred mix of strategic forces, particularly by decreasing their reliance on ICBMs and moving toward sea-based and bomber capabilities;⁸⁶
- 2) "The Soviets have also opposed U.S. proposals that have had the effect of blocking a promising new weapons program in an advanced stage of development;⁸⁷ and,
- 3) "Another sticking point for the Soviet Union has involved U.S. proposals calling for the dismantling or destruction of weapon systems before the end of their useful lifetimes, particularly recently-deployed systems."

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 52-54.

⁸⁶ Einhorn believes that Soviet rejection of limits on Backfire in SALT II was because of this consideration.

⁸⁷ Einhorn notes Soviet rejection of establishing boundaries between light and heavy ICBMs in SALT as a key example.

It appears that in START there were two categories of non-negotiable systems from the Soviet perspective. First, as Einhorn has noted, the Soviets were reluctant to negotiate limits on intercontinental hard-target kill capability. This was a consistent Soviet tendency throughout the SALT and START processes. Second, the Soviets were reluctant to negotiate limits on Eurostrategic systems below a certain level. That level varied during the course of the INF talks but corresponded roughly to the minimum number of warheads the Soviet Union would need to cover critical, time-urgent targets in Western Europe -- usually given as about 100 targets.

IV. CONCLUSIONS REGARDING
BARGAINING LEVERAGE

A. U.S. Bargaining Leverage in START
from the Soviet Perspective

This chapter and the one preceding it have sought to present an analysis that distinguishes between two elements of Soviet threat perceptions regarding arms control -- one general and abstract, the other more specific. The first involves Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces, which acts as a general analytical device for explaining Soviet gains in ideological terms -- treated in Chapter Four. The other relates to Soviet perceptions of U.S. bargaining leverage -- examined in this chapter.

The basic conclusions of Chapter Four were that Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces in the early 1980s posed sufficient incentives for the Soviets to seek and enter negotiations on issues of strategic arms reductions with the United States, but on the other hand, the lack of credible U.S. bargaining leverage in what would be START-accountable systems was insufficient to make reaching a START agreement a relatively high Soviet priority.

NATO INF modernization posed the most immediate threat to the correlation of forces in Soviet calculations and perceptions; and therefore had the greater priority in Soviet arms negotiation postures. Since the U.S. was more interested in a START than in an INF agreement, the Soviets

used this as bargaining leverage to achieve their objectives in the INF negotiations.

A further conclusion regarding Soviet threat perceptions was that limitation and reduction of strategic offensive arms did not warrant a new treaty in the Soviet view, merely continuation of SALT framework, which was facilitated by keeping strategic arms negotiations alive. A review of threat perception sources of Soviet interests in strategic arms reductions shows a Soviet interest in negotiating only, and not in reaching agreement. This interest in negotiating START stemmed from:

-- a desire to use that forum to extract U.S. concessions in the INF talks; and,

-- a desire to use the talks to keep Congressional hopes for arms reductions alive, and thereby to keep up domestic pressure on the Reagan administration's strategic modernization programs.

These conclusions have important implications for bargaining leverage. Reagan began his administration with high prospects for acquiring substantial bargaining leverage. It is possible that the Soviets calculated that Reagan would be unusually successful in getting his strategic modernization program through Congress, and this may have led to their interest in beginning START when they did. However, by late 1983 it may have become apparent to the Soviets that the Reagan strategic modernization program could not be sustained at the momentum the Administration

had hoped for, and was not materializing to the extent predicted, or that it was taking a different (i.e. more benign) direction than they (the Soviets) had originally feared. In short, Reagan's strategic modernization program failed to materialize during the course of the START negotiations.

Given the correlation between Soviet threat perceptions and interest arms control outcomes, what constitutes meaningful bargaining leverage from the Western perspective? Several answers are suggested by the material presented in this chapter. They would include:

-- new technologies

-- new weapon systems that give the edge to the technologically advanced side

-- evidence of Western bloc unity

-- evidence of U.S. resolve in foreign policy, military strategy, and weapons procurement

B. The Soviet Bargaining Position in START

Three main conclusions can be derived from the foregoing chapter. First, the Soviet military played a predominant role in the implementation of Soviet START policy. Second, Soviet START proposals were shaped by Soviet military requirements. In no case did the Soviets

show the slightest propensity to consider a U.S. proposal that would have substantially reduced their hard-target kill potential, restructured their existing mix of strategic nuclear assets, or impinge on their ability to cover critical Eurostrategic targets.

Third, Soviet military objectives at the time of START were adequately served by strategic arms reduction negotiations, and not necessarily by a START-type agreement. By the beginning of START negotiations in 1982, the Soviet Union had achieved a clear superiority over the United States in prompt hard-target kill capability. In the Soviet view, relative advantages in this capability are decisive in deterring and defeating any potential aggressor. In large measure, the Soviet military had achieved its strategic objectives in nuclear forces relative to the United States. It no longer needed an arms control (or reduction) agreement to achieve strategic superiority -- it only needed to maintain that superiority, and it sought to do this by keeping strategic arms negotiations alive while not necessarily seeking an outcome that included a signed treaty.

A question arises concerning the degree to which the United States can effectively impact on Soviet interests in arms control from a bargaining leverage perspective. Einhorn makes the following observation on this score:

The Soviets have been able to reach the judgment that, in the absence of agreement, the United States would not be in a position credibly to threaten a numerical buildup that they would have difficulty matching, given their ongoing programs and open production lines. So, despite continuing U.S. advantages in several important areas of the strategic competition, the greater Soviet numerical momentum has been a critical part of the setting in which negotiations have taken place and has had adverse implications for U.S. negotiating leverage.⁸⁸

He further notes that:

Soviet willingness in the future to limit their large MIRVed ICBMs may have less to do with what the United States is prepared to offer in return than with how the Soviets see their own force requirements evolving in a changing strategic environment.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Negotiating from Strength, pp. 27-28.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 50.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOVIET LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION AS AN OBSTACLE TO A STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION AGREEMENT

This chapter seeks to develop two themes. First, the time was not propitious for an equitable U.S.-Soviet strategic arms reduction agreement because of leadership changes in the Soviet Union. Second, even had Andropov consolidated his authority and influence in an unprecedentedly quick manner, he showed no disposition to compromise with the West on a strategic arms reduction agreement that would have benefited the security position of the United States and NATO.

An important source of Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement along the lines of Reagan's START proposals can be found in the leadership context of the START negotiations. Throughout the course of the START negotiations, there was an on-going succession process (one hesitate's to call it a "crisis") in the Soviet

Union. Periods of leadership succession in the Soviet Union have traditionally been characterized by a lack of important or far-reaching policy-making initiatives, especially in foreign affairs. This includes arms control. Due to the leadership succession process taking place in the Soviet Union during the START negotiations, it may be assumed that the Soviet Union was not in a position to seriously consider the kinds of concessions and trade-offs that would have been necessary were the U.S. to secure a strategically sound nuclear arms reduction agreement with the Soviet Union.

This chapter will argue that the change in Soviet leadership occurring in November 1982, in the midst of the START and INF negotiations, with Yuri Andropov succeeding Leonid Brezhnev as General Secretary of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee, prevented the Soviet Union from pursuing any major compromises or arms control initiatives beyond those that already commanded consensual support among the Soviet leadership prior to the succession. This apparent consensus was composed of a relatively hard-line on INF talks, and an even harder line on START, in which the Soviets linked any progress to resolution of their INF concerns.

It is important to be absolutely clear about one point at the outset. The central theme of this chapter is that Soviet leadership succession was a source of Soviet disinterest in a strategic arms reduction agreement during the first set of START negotiations from June 1982 to

December 1983. What must be stressed is that the dynamics of succession did not preclude Soviet interest in a START agreement along the lines it had itself proposed in Geneva. Moscow would gladly have signed an agreement providing for American acquiescence in all aspects of its START and INF positions. These positions almost certainly reflected a broad consensus within the Soviet leadership that transcended possible dissent on the part of any one faction.¹ It can be assumed that the Soviet leadership succession would not have affected either the existing Soviet stance in the START negotiations or the Soviet ability and desire to pursue U.S. initiatives accommodating the Soviet position.

However, the Soviet succession problem did affect Soviet flexibility in pursuing avenues of compromise as proposed by the United States, compromises that might have entailed significant deviations from the Soviets' own set positions. In other words, the succession precluded Soviet interest in any kind of strategic arms reduction agreement except the one they had proposed. It reduced considerably the flexibility needed to forge compromises among the Soviet elite on an arms reduction agreement whose terms would have

¹ It should be noted that Soviet START policy in this period was essentially a continuation of Soviet SALT policy from the 1970s, and therefore enjoyed a consensus established over the previous decade.

been more acceptable and beneficial to the United States. It was, therefore, unreasonable for the United States to have expected a favorable outcome to the START process, even if the United States had initiated a major opening (as some Americans urged)² until after the series of leadership successions which the Soviet Union experienced in 1982, 1984, and 1985 had been resolved, or had the U.S. acquired the requisite bargaining leverage.

I. LEADERSHIP PRECONDITIONS FOR SOVIET INTEREST IN ARMS CONTROL

A. The Historical Leadership Context of Soviet Disarmament Initiatives

The influence of individuals on national policy is perhaps nowhere more consistently significant than in communist regimes, the Soviet Union foremost among them, as Rodger Swearingen observed:

There is a curious paradox pervading the history of the Communist realm. A movement which views history as the outcome of the clash of predetermined, impersonal forces

² For example, as William G. Hyland did just two days after Andropov's accession to the Soviet Party leadership in an op-ed piece entitled, "Soviet's New Era," New York Times, 14 Nov. 1982.

cannot, in fact, be fathomed except in terms of the characters who have shaped its destiny.³

To review the historical correlation between the leadership context and Soviet interests in disarmament discussed in the first chapter, it should be remembered that periods of relatively high Soviet interest in arms control have been marked by post-succession leadership stability. These periods included the early 1920s, the late 1920s, the mid-1950s, the early 1960s, and the late 1960s to late 1970s.

In the early 1920s, Lenin was strongly committed to disarmament for a variety of reasons, including the exploitation of pacifism in the West, appearing to be a champion of peace, and fostering an image of ideological moderation in order to obtain trade and credit concessions from the West.⁴ In the late 1920s, Stalin committed his country to disarmament as one dimension of an overall policy of "collective security" designed to avoid the political isolation of Soviet state.⁵ In the mid-1950s, Khrushchev

³ From the Introduction to Rodger Swearingen, ed., Leaders of the Communist World, (New York: Free Press, 1971), p. ix.

⁴ See Walter C. Clemens, "Lenin on Disarmament." Slavic Review. 23, 3 (Sept. 1964): 504-525.

⁵ See the analysis in Xenia Joukoff Eudin and Robert M. Slusser, eds., Soviet Foreign Policy, 1928-1934: Documents and Materials, 2 vols. (University Park, Penn.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1966); and Louis Fischer, The

used a commitment to disarmament to underscore his assertions of 'peaceful coexistence,' as well as for propaganda, political, military, and foreign policy purposes.⁶

Brezhnev undertook a commitment to arms control in the late 1960s to late 1970s period for a variety of foreign policy and military-strategic reasons that probably included promoting détente, masking an on-going strategic weapons build-up (that went unmoderated by SALT I and II) and enhancing American inhibitions to strategic weapon programs.

In every case, for whatever motivation, high Soviet interest in arms control has traditionally corresponded to periods of undisputed leadership stability in the Soviet Union. Each of these periods were characterized by a leader who survived a succession crisis, or some other challenge to his authority (e.g. the multiple challenges to Lenin's authority at the time of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations), and who emerged as the single most powerful individual in the Soviet state.

What also emerges from these eras is that disarmament was used by each successive Soviet leader to serve some

Soviets In World Affairs, 1917-1929, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951).

⁶ Lincoln P. Bloomfield, Walter C. Clemens and Franklyn Griffiths, Khrushchev and the Arms Race: Soviet Interests in Arms Control and Disarmament, 1954-1964, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966).

wider political objective. Disarmament was never an end in itself.

B. Importance of a Leader Whose Authority Is Consolidated

Hypothetically, a strong leader is necessary to forge a consensus on major foreign policy initiatives, especially those affecting Soviet national security. In this respect, personal leadership commitment to arms control is an apparent precondition for Soviet interest in signing an arms agreement. One can only speculate on why this is so. An important reason may be that genuine disarmament is a concept foreign to Soviet leaders, who are preoccupied with a siege mentality historically characterized by the notion of 'capitalist encirclement.' Original Marxist-Leninist doctrine taught that disarmament was impossible until after capitalist states first disarmed, or were eliminated by the sweep of world proletariat revolution altogether.⁷ It is easy to suspect that modern Soviet leaders still harbor this suspicion. Indeed, ultimate loyalty to Marxist-Leninist ideology requires such a conviction.

Also, given an inherent hostility toward genuine disarmament in a world of divided and competing ideologies, it is possible that a strong leader is needed to convince a

⁷ See Clemens, and V.I. Lenin, "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution," in V.I. Lenin: Selected Works, Vol. I, (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), pp. 740-749.

reluctant Soviet elite to place its vested interests on the negotiating table.

Some evidence has been cited to this effect.

Following Pres. Carter's March 1977 "repudiation" of the 1974 Vladivostok Accords, and his unveiling of the "Comprehensive Proposal," Georgy Kornienko, senior deputy to Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, told Paul Warnke: "You shouldn't have disregarded the fact that Brezhnev had to spill political blood to get the Vladivostok accords."⁸ This is an indication that Brezhnev played a pivotal role in getting support for the Vladivostok agreements, and that there were sources of internal resistance that had to be overcome by internal political negotiating.

Further, a strong leader may be necessary to coordinate a comprehensive campaign of deception and disinformation of which appearing interested in arms control negotiations or proposals is one part.

Paul Nitze provided the following insight into Soviet decision-making for arms control noting that a prior decision by the Politburo is a precondition to genuine Soviet interest in negotiating an agreement:

[P]rogress is generally possible only if there has been a prior full Politburo decision favoring a deal on the

⁸ Quoted in Strobe Talbott, Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II, (New York: Harper & Row, 1979, p. 73; and Raymond L. Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1985), p. 465.

specific subject matter or, in the case of arms control, a prior decision by the Soviet Defense Council. It is pretty well agreed that nothing can be done by the Soviet government, or by any of the other organs of Soviet society subject to party control, which is in conflict with decisions of the Politburo. Furthermore, it is generally agreed that decisions concerning the basic issues of defense, national security and arms control are made in the Defense Council, which is customarily chaired by the General Secretary of the Party and on which a certain number of the other members of the Politburo also sit. . . . Once there has been a prior high-level decision, it is up to the Soviet negotiators to get the best possible deal for the Soviet Union. Then, and only then, will they negotiate seriously with the objectives of arriving at a deal. If there has been no such prior positive high-level decision, the United States will find itself negotiating with itself.⁹

It should be noted that the above factors would be especially true in cases involving strategic arms reductions, since this would involve important sacrifices or cuts in the most important elements of Soviet security against capitalist imperialism.

C. Power Struggles and Factions in the Soviet Leadership

The U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations offered the following observation:

If Andropov wants to make any significant policy departures, he must first be politically strong enough to overcome the tenacious resistance of a hierarchy whose positions and privileges are based on the status quo.¹⁰

⁹ Paul H. Nitze, "Living with the Soviets," Foreign Affairs, 63, 2 (Winter 1984/85), p. 362.

¹⁰ U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Soviet Union: Prospects for the

The notion that strong central leadership is a precondition to forging a consensus on arms control policies presumes that there are factions within a given leadership that are more or less committed to arms control than are other factions. The assumption that this is equally true for the Soviet Union has been around a long time.¹¹ However, when we are speaking of the Soviet Union, it is an assumption that requires some qualification.

It is easy to fall into the trap of equating Soviet political processes with U.S. dynamics, or resorting to the classic, but discredited "hawks" vs. "doves" dichotomy. Arkady Shevchenko, in Breaking With Moscow, presents evidence that there are, in fact, divisions in the Soviet bureaucracy, but a careful reading of the evidence shows that if there are Soviet "doves" they are strictly subordinated to "hawks" and insulated from key policy-making positions, and furthermore are tolerated only so long as useful for peripheral staffing tasks.¹² This is to say that

Relationship, 98th Congress, 1st session (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1983), p. 6.

¹¹ Alexander Dallin, et al., The Soviet Union and Disarmament: An Appraisal of Soviet Attitudes and Intentions, (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp. 77-78.

¹² Arkady Shevchenko, Breaking with Moscow, (New York: Knopf, 1985), pp. 180-181; see also, Igor Glagolev, "The Soviet Decision-Making Process in Arms Control Negotiations," Orbis, 21, (Winter 1978).

there are 'factions' but not along the lines Americans are familiar with.¹³

[T]here is abundant evidence that the USSR is not a monolith, that decisions are not just the outcome of informed pragmatic calculations, but that they also reflect an interplay of a variety of powerful and assertive institutional interests operating within the framework of the Soviet bureaucratic system.¹⁴

The idea that the Soviet leadership is split by factions serves as a deception to obscure fundamental unity on long-term objectives of Soviet policy. On this, Anatoliy Golitsyn has written:

The disinformation effort to keep alive Western belief in the existence and inevitability of recurrent power struggles in the leadership of communist parities serves several purposes. There is an obvious close connection between power struggles and factionalism; neither exists without the other. Disinformation on power struggles therefore supports and complements disinformation operations based on spurious factionalism, such as those on de-Stalinization, the Soviet-Albanian and Sino-Soviet splits, and democratization in Czechoslovakia in 1968. It further serves to obscure the unity, coordination, and continuity within the bloc in pursuit of an agreed long-range policy. . . . The West is more likely to make concessions, for example, over SALT negotiations, or the

¹³ A contemporary treatment of foreign policy "groupings" in the Soviet Union can be found Christer Jonsson, "Foreign Policy Ideas and Groupings in the Soviet Union," in Roger E. Kanet, Soviet Foreign Policy and East-West Relations, (New York: Pergamon, 1982), pp. 3-26; groups specifically concerned with Soviet arms control policy-making are identified and discussed in Rose E. Gottemoeller, "Decisionmaking for Arms Limitation in the Soviet Union," in Hans Guenter Brauch and Duncan L. Clarke, eds., Decisionmaking for Arms Limitation: Assessments and Prospects, (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1983), pp. 53-80.

¹⁴ Dimitri K. Simes, "Are the Soviets Interested in Arms Control?" Washington Quarterly, (Spring 1985), p. 147.

supply of high technology goods to the Soviet Union or China, if it believes that by so doing it will strengthen the hand of a 'liberal' or 'pragmatic' tendency or faction with the party leadership. Conversely, the West can be persuaded to attribute aggressive aspects of communist policy to the influence of hard-liners in the leadership.¹⁵

D. Impact of Leadership Succession on Soviet Policy

It has long been assumed by scholars of Soviet political processes that Soviet foreign and domestic policy undergoes a certain degree of paralysis during a succession crisis. Philip G. Roeder characterizes this assumption as follows: "during successions, Leninist regimes such as the Soviet Union are far less capable of dynamic responses to pressing problems."¹⁶ Dimitri K. Simes points up another aspect of Soviet leadership succession processes:

The impact of the Soviet domestic political process is particularly great today in the absence of a strong General Secretary. Without a genuine chief executive, those vested interests among the Soviet elite enjoy particular autonomy to pursue their special agendas and (as a minimum) to exercise veto over proposals of which they disapprove.¹⁷

¹⁵ Anatoliy Golitsyn, New Lies for Old: The Communist Strategy of Deception and Disinformation, (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1984), pp. 206-207.

¹⁶ Philip G. Roeder, "Do New Soviet Leaders Really Make a Difference? Rethinking the 'Succession Connection,'" American Political Science Review, vol. 79 (1985), p. 958; also see A. Brown, "The Soviet Succession: From Andropov to Chernenko," vol. 40, World Today, (1984): 134-141.

¹⁷ Simes, p. 147.

Sovietologists have discerned two stages in past Soviet leadership successions. According to George W. Breslauer, the first stage (which in both the Khrushchev and Brezhnev cases lasted four years) is often characterized by:

[R]ival programs for significant change in policy structure, by zigzags in policy, and by the polarization of positions as policy disputes fed into the power struggle and as the major protagonists seized on opportunities to portray their rivals in an unfavorable light.¹⁸

According to Breslauer, during the second stage:

[T]he party leader forged a comprehensive program in domestic and foreign policy, in so doing striking a compromise among conflicting tendencies, advocating significant changes in economic policy and administrative structure, and proposing significant Soviet initiatives for the sake of US-Soviet collaboration in order to regularize the arms race, reduce confrontations, outflank the PRC in international affairs, and increase access to Western trade and credits.¹⁹

Note that Breslauer claims a defense buildup accompanied both the Khrushchev and Brezhnev succession periods.²⁰

Raymond Garthoff writes of the post-Brezhnev era:

[T]he post-Brezhnev time of transition has meant that all policy decisions have become more political, that is, more susceptible to political challenge and to the need for constant reconfirmation of consensus among the

¹⁸ George W. Breslauer, "Political Succession and the Soviet Policy Agenda," Problems of Communism, 29, 3 (May-June 1980), p. 35.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 43-44.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 43.

leadership and key institutional constituencies, including the military.²¹

In other words, major initiatives relating to strategic arms control policy, or significant flexibility in arms control negotiations, should not be expected until after the ostensible first stage of the succession period has been completed. It can be argued that the Andropov succession, even if having cleared the first stage in an unprecedentedly short time, had barely reached this second stage before Andropov dropped from public sight in the Soviet Union due to terminal illnesses, and the process of a new succession period had begun.²²

I. THE ANDROPOV SUCCESSION

Richard Staar has suggested that Andropov's succession probably began in January 1982 with the death of chief ideologist Mikhail Suslov. In May 1982 Andropov was made secretary in charge of ideology, a position expected to have gone to Chernenko.²³ This has been interpreted as

²¹ Detente and Confrontation, p. 16.

²² That the Andropov succession was also characterized by this two-stage process is confirmed by Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, "Andropov's Takeover," International Perspectives, July/August 1983, pp. 10-13.

²³ See Richard F. Staar, USSR Foreign Policies After Detente, (Stanford: Hoover, 1985), p. 36; Seweryn Bialer, The Soviet Paradox: External Expansion, Internal Decline,

evidence of Andropov's ascendancy over supporters of Chernenko, and foreshadowed his securing the top position despite (or perhaps because of) Chernenko's seniority.

Yuri Valdimirovich Andropov was made General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party on 12 November 1982. Western officials immediately predicted that he would stress continuity in Soviet foreign policy. And yet, in terms of on-going arms negotiations, continuity meant perpetuating a Soviet-imposed stalemate. The Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff was quoted the day after Andropov's accession as saying it would be "difficult for the Soviets to move off their present position in this round . . . I don't see anything coming out of the present round of arms negotiations."²⁴ This sentiment was echoed by foreign policy specialists and officials in European and Asian countries, where it was feared the absence of strong Soviet leader would forestall new arms control initiatives and maintain the paralysis then believed to characterize the arms talks.²⁵

(New York: Knopf, 1986), p. 83; and William E. Odom, "Choice and Change in Soviet Politics," in Erik P. Hoffmann and Robbin F. Laird, eds., The Soviet Polity in the Modern Era, (New York: Aldin Publishing, 1984), pp. 916-920.

²⁴ Joseph Volz, "Standstill Is Seen In Arms Talks," New York Times, 13 Nov. 1982.

²⁵ Comments by officials from Germany, Britain, France, Italy, India, and even Peking, are cited in William Drozdiak, "Brezhnev's Death Evokes Concern Over Detente," Washington Post, 12 Nov. 1982.

A statement issued by TASS on the naming of Andropov as Party Chief stressed continuity of policy:

On instruction of the Politburo of the Central Committee, Konstantin Chernenko, member of the Politburo and secretary of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee, made a speech. He nominated Yuri Andropov for election to the post of General Secretary of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee.

The plenary meeting unanimously elected Yuri Andropov General Secretary of the C.P.S.U. Central Committee. . . .

Yuri Andropov assured the C.P.S.U. Central Committee and the Communist Party that he will devote all his energy, knowledge and experience of life to the successful implementation of the program of building Communism charted in the decisions of the 26th C.P.S.U. Congress and to insuring continuity in solving the tasks of further enhancing the economic and defense might of the U.S.S.R., improving the welfare of the Soviet people and carrying out all the Leninist domestic and foreign policies that had been pursued under Leonid Brezhnev.²⁶

Andropov's emphasis on continuity of policy was probably intended to reassure those who had supported him rather than Chernenko, and to facilitate the rapid consolidation of party support. But it may also have reflected the realities of the impact of successions on Soviet policy-making processes.

Western assessments of what to expect from Andropov's leadership clearly anticipated continuity in Soviet foreign

²⁶ "TASS Statement on Choice of Andropov as Party Chief," New York Times, 13 Nov. 1982.

and domestic policy,²⁷ including emphasis on improving relations with the PRC.²⁸ This continuity was also expected to mean a continuing low priority on arms control agreements with the Reagan administration.

U.S. observers also pointed to the lack of Soviet movement on four critical issues as evidence that Andropov was not pursuing any substantive shifts in policy. These issues included human rights, withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola, nuclear weapons proliferation, and nuclear arms control.²⁹

Other general aspects of Andropov's policy priorities revealed a determination to maintain, above all, the Soviet offensive against the outside world: "The first year of the Andropov era revealed a fundamental fact about the policy of the leader: the war goes on. The first steps taken were

²⁷ For predictions of continuity in Andropov's general policy initiatives, see Martin McCauley, "Leadership and the Succession Struggle," in Martin McCauley, ed., The Soviet Union After Brezhnev, (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983), pp. 12-39, especially pp. 31-37; and Odom, "Choice and Change in Soviet Politics," pp. 932-939. Odom marks agricultural policy as the one area where Andropov was likely to make major changes.

²⁸ William Beecher, "Some Clues on What to Expect from Andropov Regime," Boston Globe, 3 Dec. 1982.

²⁹ See, for example, Don Oberdorfer, "Andropov Holding Soviet Policy on Steady Course," Washington Post, 2 Feb. 1983.

aimed at strengthening the home front and undermining the enemy."³⁰

Andropov's policy priorities may have involved a cynical form of opening to the West, taking the form of a "peace offensive" but held little prospect for substantive arms reductions.

In June 1983 Charles Krauthammer wrote in reference to Andropov that "With him, not Brezhnev, in charge of the Soviet Union, the world will be a more dangerous place."³¹ Indeed, available evidence suggests that Andropov moved quickly to consolidate his authority and influence, and adopted a ruthless bent in his policy initiatives.

Krauthammer argues that Andropov quickly endowed Soviet foreign policy with what he terms "the Andropov factor," defined as a Soviet "willingness to risk and provoke that will make its adversaries think twice." Noting Andropov's reputation for ruthlessness, Krauthammer notes that a radical increase in Soviet power over the preceding two decades constituted an important factor promoting Andropov's heightened assertiveness in foreign policy.³² This assertiveness predated Andropov and was most markedly

³⁰ Michael Heller, "Andropov: A Retrospective View," Survey, 28, 1 (Spring 1984), p. 55.

³¹ Charles Krauthammer, "The Andropov Factor," The New Republic, 188, 23 (13 June 1983): 19.

³² Ibid., p. 21.

demonstrated by Brezhnev's invasion of Afghanistan.³³ But Andropov without doubt brought a penchant for risk-taking, even with relatively low apparent gains, to his position at the helm of Soviet global power. According to Krauthammer, Andropov presided over an increasingly aggressive Soviet policy in the border wars raging in Cambodia, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Central America; in Soviet actions toward friendly nations such as Sweden (i.e. submarines in territorial waters); in almost halting Jewish immigration; and, in elevating the status of the KGB by promoting its chief to the position of Party Secretary.³⁴

There were three reasons for suspecting that Andropov's consolidation of power had fallen short of expectations as of January 1983, according to administration analysts as reported by the Washington Times:³⁵

- (1) the sharp contrast between Andropov's optimistic, compromising tone on strategic nuclear arms in response to an American journalist last week, and a hard-hitting attack on the U.S. arms position in an authoritative Pravda editorial last weekend;
- (2) apparent contradictions in Soviet statements regarding Afghanistan; and,

³³ The KGB's role in the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan should provide an interesting subject for consideration.

³⁴ Krauthammer, p. 21.

³⁵ Peter Almond, "U.S. Doubts Andropov Losing Power," Washington Times, 4 Jan. 1983.

- (3) failure of the Supreme Soviet to immediately appoint Andropov head of state (concurrently with his position as head of the Soviet communist party).³⁶

In addition, other observers of the Soviet leadership scene have noted the following:

The failure of the June [1983] Central Committee session to remove Chernenko and elect Andropov's supporters as new voting members of the Politburo; the earlier replacement of Fedorchuk by Chebrikov as the KGB chief; and some contradictory policy pronouncements from the Kremlin (e.g. on the acute nationality problem) appear to reflect the continuing difficulties encountered by Andropov in consolidating his power.³⁷

On the other hand, other analysts noted the relative quick appointment of Andropov, in sharp contrast to the lengthy succession crises of the past, and Andropov's swift successes in moving his own people into top administrative positions.³⁸ Furthermore, some analysts interpreted Andropov's failure to secure the largely ceremonial head of state appointment as an indication of political adroitness, in view of the possibility that "many Soviets might have been frightened by the specter of the former boss of the KGB

³⁶ Although William Beecher reports the theory that Andropov himself avoided assuming this post out of political adroitness, to avoid "the specter of the former boss of the KGB moving precipitously to grab all of Leonid Brezhnev's titles before his body was cold." See "Some Clues on What to Expect from Andropov Regime," footnote 28.

³⁷ Bociurkiw, "Andropov's Takeover," p. 13.

³⁸ "U.S. Doubts Andropov Losing Power," Washington Times, 4 Jan. 1983.

moving precipitously to grab all of Leonid Brezhnev's titles before his body was cold."³⁹

Andropov acquired the last of the three top positions held by Brezhnev (General Secretary of the CPSU, chairman of the Defense Council, and chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium) on 16 June 1983 when he became chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. In just over six months he had acquired the positions it had taken Brezhnev 13 years to accumulate.⁴⁰

The U.S. seems to have taken a cautious stance toward the new Soviet leader, declining to press for an early summit meeting and urging instead a spring or summer 1983 meeting between Gromyko and Secretary of State George P. Shultz.⁴¹

Andropov's tenure in office was accompanied by well-orchestrated perceptions management efforts aimed at fostering an image of flexibility and renewed interest in East-West détente on the part of the new Soviet leader. Andropov had ostensibly been a long-time supporter of détente, favoring such a course as early as 1975 and

³⁹ Beecher, "Some Clues on What to Expect From Andropov Regime," cited in footnote 28.

⁴⁰ Staar, pp. 37-38.

⁴¹ Don Oberdorfer, "Andropov Holding Soviet Policy on Steady Course," Washington Post, 2 Feb. 1983.

defending it as late as 1980, even after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.⁴²

Another element of this perceptions management campaign included "hints by several prominent Soviets that Andropov's KGB had opposed [the] invasion of Afghanistan, and suggestions that the new leader [was] more interested than his predecessor in a diplomatic way out."⁴³

II. ANDROPOV'S ARMS CONTROL POLICY

Andropov's arms control policies can be sketched in fairly brief terms. INF was emphasized as the top priority. Themes in the Soviet INF negotiating posture stressed the Soviet view that parity existed and would be upset by NATO INF deployments; the Soviets would have to be compensated for British and French systems; and progress in START was linked to Western concessions on the INF issue. Finally, the termination of both INF and START was apparently insisted upon by Andropov.

In START, Andropov's policies also showed strong elements of consistency with Brezhnev's approach, placing priority on American acceptance of a nuclear freeze as a precondition to negotiations on strategic weapons

⁴² On Andropov's alleged devotion to détente, see Jerry F. Hough, "Soviet Succession: Issues and Personalities," Problems of Communism, 31, 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1982), pp. 33-34.

⁴³ Don Oberdorfer, "Andropov Holding Soviet Policy on Steady Course," Washington Post, 2 Feb. 1983. See also Staar, p. 36.

reductions. Andropov also extended an offer of token cuts from the Vladivostok/SALT II limits. Beyond this, any substance to Andropov's START position involved little more than acrid denunciations of U.S. proposals as unfair, unequal, fraudulent, and insincere.

Even before the news broke that Yuri Andropov had been appointed General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Western experts on Soviet matters interviewed in the press stressed that they expected the new Soviet leadership to seize the opportunity to exploit Western public opinion in Europe with a "peace offensive" stressing a "nuclear freeze" and aimed at defeating NATO INF deployment plans in Western Europe. Some felt it would be motivated by serious Soviet economic difficulties. Others felt this would be a minor incentive; but all seemed to agree that any Soviet moves in the arms control arena would be of a tactical nature, rather than a significant change in policy. Significantly, none expected major initiatives in the START negotiations.⁴⁴ These predictions by and large were proven correct. Andropov did initiate a major propaganda offensive aimed at INF. START was again relegated to a subordinate position.

⁴⁴ See report of interviews with Robert Burns, Amos Jordan, and Fritz Ermarth in Charles W. Corddry, "Arms Reduction Push Expected From Moscow," Baltimore Sun, 12 Nov. 1982.

Andropov launched four major policy initiatives soon after assuming the office of Party General Secretary.

Seweryn Bialer describes them as follows:

The first was greater candor in relations between leadership and population . . . The second initiative sought to convince the public that the new leader was hard at work, on top of his job, and capable of resolving the difficulties inherited from Brezhnev . . . The third was a visible and repeated effort to show that the new leadership was strong and united, and ready and able to defend Soviet power and prevent its enemies from taking advantage of the period of transition. . . . The fourth was probably the most important and impressive. It sought to enforce greater discipline in the workplace and society at large, as well as to reduce blatant official and unofficial corruption.⁴⁵

Andropov's first major foreign policy speech was delivered to a joint meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, gathered to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the USSR.⁴⁶ Apparently, this speech was carried live on Soviet television.⁴⁷ As predicted, Andropov restated major Soviet arms control themes of the previous few years, and focused on INF.

⁴⁵ The Soviet Paradox, p. 91.

⁴⁶ See "Report by Soviet General Secretary Andropov: Nuclear Arms Reduction Proposals and Confidence-Building Measures [Extracts], Dec. 21, 1982," Documents on Disarmament, 1982, (Washington, D.C.: USGPO,), pp. 917-922.

⁴⁷ Strobe Talbott, Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control, updated edition (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), p. 161.

Andropov first renounced nuclear war, which "must not be allowed to break out." He reiterated the Soviet Union's commitment not to use nuclear weapons first, and said the Soviet Union was "prepared to agree that the sides should renounce first use of conventional, as well as nuclear arms."⁴⁸ He then turned to the START negotiations, saying that the U.S. approach to START "can on no account be acceptable to the Soviet Union, and, for that matter, to all those who have a stake in preserving and consolidating peace."⁴⁹ He repeated the standing Soviet position calling for a 25 percent reduction in strategic arms and a freeze on the strategic arsenals of the two sides while the negotiations were under way. He did not offer any new START initiatives.

Giving a vague approbation to confidence-building measures that would be designed to "take the finger off the trigger, and put a reliable safety catch on all weapons," Andropov turned to the INF negotiations. Here he said the "Soviet Union is prepared to go very far."⁵⁰ Moscow offered to reduce INF weapons in Europe to the level of French and British forces: "We are prepared, among other things, to agree that the Soviet Union should retain in Europe only as

⁴⁸ "Report by General Secretary Andropov," p. 919.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 921.

many missiles as are kept there by Britain and France -- not a single one more."⁵¹ Andropov also offered to match any reductions the British and French might make in their forces, and urged that aircraft be included in an INF accord.

In an interview with the Soviet press eight days later, Andropov suggested the Soviet Union was prepared to accept either an "absolute zero" option for INF systems in Europe, or a two-thirds reduction (down to the Soviet count of British and French forces).⁵²

Clearly Andropov's highest arms control priority was INF, and not START.

The continuity in Soviet INF policy after the Andropov succession probably indicated that Andropov had personally been involved in, or at least approved of Soviet INF policy planning prior to his appointment as General Secretary. In fact, Yuli Kvitsinsky, the Soviet ambassador to the INF talks confirmed this soon after Brezhnev's death.⁵³ Many hoped in the West that "the changing of the guard in the Kremlin offered an opportunity for progress," but these hopes were to be disappointed by a renewed hard-line:

51 Ibid.

52 "Interview of Soviet General Secretary Andropov, December 30, 1982," Documents on Disarmament, 1982, p. 927.

53 Talbott, Deadly Gambits, p. 159.

However, nothing in Andropov's pronouncements from on high, or in his negotiators' statements in Geneva, indicated that the Soviets were any more willing than before to countenance new American missiles in Europe. On the contrary, the conciliatory rhetoric seemed primarily intended to encourage West European hopes that an agreement might yet spare them having to go through with deployment and to contend with the Soviet countermeasures that would inevitably follow. In effect, the softer words were in the service of the same hard line, which was to block deployment -- or, failing that, to punish it.⁵⁴

In any case, Andropov had succeeded in projecting an image of flexibility in the INF negotiations, one the U.S. felt obliged to counteract.⁵⁵

In the aftermath of the November 1983 collapse of the INF talks, Western diplomats suggested that prospects for a settlement may have been doomed by uncertainties in the Kremlin leadership. An article in the New York Times noted that:

Principal among the uncertainties is that Yuri V. Andropov appears to be slipping in authority because of illness. As a result, diplomats say they doubt there has been any voice in the Politburo strong enough to argue for more flexibility in Geneva.⁵⁶

Other sources noted the apparent paralysis in Soviet foreign policy during the period of Andropov's decline: "Throughout [this] period, there was little movement on

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 160.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 167, 192.

⁵⁶ John F. Burns, "The Walkout By Moscow," New York Times, 26 Nov. 1983.

Moscow's part toward greater conciliation or greater confrontation with the U.S."⁵⁷ This seemed true despite the occurrence of several crises in U.S.-Soviet relations in the Fall of 1983, including the shooting down of a South Korean airliner by the Soviet Union, NATO INF deployments in Europe, and hostilities in Lebanon.

By late fall, 1983, top Soviet policy-makers may have become preoccupied with either propping up an image of Andropov as a leader in control, or jockeying for position in the face of an imminent succession struggle.⁵⁸ Such diversions could not have helped but limit the Soviet Union's ability to dynamically interact with the United States on issues of strategic nuclear arms reductions.

Some Western observer's detected a hardening of the Soviet position toward the U.S. in the Fall of 1983. Many attributed this to the KAL 007 incident and American reactions in its aftermath.

In September 1983, Leslie Gelb of the New York Times commented:

Mr. Andropov's statement seemed to say that Moscow had written off the prospects of compromising and reaching

⁵⁷ "The Kremlin Goes On Automatic Pilot," U.S. News & World Report, 19 Dec. 1983, p. 26.

⁵⁸ Dusko Doder, "Soviets Stress Andropov Still Wields Power," Washington Post, 29 Dec. 1983.

arms limitation agreements with the Reagan administration.⁵⁹

As of the Fall of 1983 Andropov was no longer in a position to exert dynamic leadership, the kind of leadership needed to rally support for conciliatory breakthroughs, even had the Soviet leadership been so inclined. Strobe Talbott reports of this period:

Andropov by now was obviously very ill, and his incapacitation seemed to be affecting the workings of the government. Instead of taking to the podium, Andropov was issuing proclamations in the pages of Pravda and on the tickers of TASS -- or the collective leadership was doing so in his name.⁶⁰

Seweryn Bialer corroborates:

The struggle for power did not end with Andropov's ascendancy. Especially in the period from late summer 1983 until his death in February 1984, there were attempts to circumvent the power potentially inherent in his positions as general secretary. At the Politburo meetings of November 4 and 5, 1983, there apparently developed major differences among members over whether to quit the INF (Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces) negotiations with the United States after the deployment of American Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. The deadlock was allegedly broken in favor of quitting by a forceful memo from the absent Andropov.⁶¹

However, other indications were that Andropov, or his coalition, were still in power as of Fall 1983. Note the

⁵⁹ Leslie Gelb, "Soviet Signal To the U.S." New York Times, 29 Sept. 1983.

⁶⁰ Talbott, Deadly Gambits, p. 197.

⁶¹ The Soviet Paradox, p. 85.

following evidence presented by Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson:

The leadership changes in the Politburo and Secretariat in late 1983 indicated to the outside world that Andropov was still in charge. In late November Gaidar Liev, a former head of the KGB in Azerbaijan, was brought into the Politburo and made First Deputy Prime Minister. In December 1983 three of four new appointees to the Party leadership had close ties with Andropov. Vitaly I. Vorotnikov and Mikhail S. Solomentsev were elevated from candidate to full Politburo membership. KGB chairman V.M. Chebrikov was made a candidate member,⁶² and Yegor Ligachev was added to the Secretariat.

Seweryn Bialer also seeks to explain Andropov's grip on power even after months of prolonged illness:

Among other factors that help to explain the paradox of Andropov's resilience, one is particularly germane to Soviet-American relations. External danger impels Soviet leaders to preserve unity at all costs. They were genuinely persuaded that President Reagan and his policies presented a grave test of their will to maintain and improve their international position. They wanted the sort of strong leadership that Andropov was able to deliver until August 1983 and that they hoped could be renewed with his recovery.⁶³

Nevertheless, despite evidence that Andropov's supporters continued to gain in strength even as illness prevented his direct intervention in Soviet politics, the Soviet leadership lacked the will or initiative to respond to major U.S. offers in START. It was the paralysis in the

⁶² Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II, 2nd ed., (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), pp. 317-18.

⁶³ The Soviet Paradox, pp. 89-90.

Soviet arms control position that made the decisive contribution to stalemate in December 1983.

III. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has sought to establish two basic themes. First, the time was not propitious for an equitable U.S.-Soviet strategic arms reduction agreement because of leadership changes in the Soviet Union. Second, even had Andropov consolidated his authority and influence in an unprecedentedly quick manner, he showed no disposition to compromise with the West on a strategic arms reduction agreement that would have benefited the security position of the United States and NATO at the expense of Soviet superiority in both strategic nuclear and INF systems.

Raymond Garthoff writes of the leadership implications for achievement in arms control at this point in time:

The conjunction of leadership changes in the United States and the Soviet Union in the early 1980s combined with an urgent need in both countries to redefine their relationship after the collapse of the détente of the 1970s. The new president in January 1981 was vigorous and ideological, had clear authority, believed in the need for a more assertive stand, and had very little awareness of international politics. The Soviet leadership, by contrast, was old and weak (Kosygin and Suslov died and Brezhnev was dying as the new leadership came into office in Washington, and then Andropov lasted barely a year and half before passing away, to be replaced by Chernenko) and was bureaucratically constrained, transitional, and ideologically ossified

and set in its ways with respect to international politics.⁶⁴

By way of conclusion, Andropov's highest arms control policy was clearly INF, not START. Further, he showed no real urgency concerning strategic arms reductions, and preferred resorting to unilateral means of dealing with nuclear forces in Europe, rather than pursue a negotiated settlement.

Was Andropov in a position to rally the Soviet leadership behind significant arms control compromises in the Fall of 1983? The evidence suggests that Andropov was certainly beyond the first stage of a typical succession process, the stage where power is consolidated, and furthermore had done so in record time. Had he so desired, it is possible that the INF and START negotiations could have proceeded past the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. Yet, as Seweryn Bialer observes, Andropov's reign was "far too short to leave a major impact on the Soviet system,"⁶⁵ and nothing short of a major impact was required for the Soviets to accede to substantial strategic arms reductions along the lines of the apparent compromises that began emerging in the talks during their final rounds.

⁶⁴ Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation, pp. 1063-1064.

⁶⁵ The Soviet Paradox, p. 90.

Genuine Soviet interest in a strategic arms reduction agreement in terms desired by Washington would have required a fundamental shift in Soviet policy. Such a fundamental shift was unlikely in the near term, given the inertial policy dynamics of Soviet succession processes. Even though Andropov moved with surprising speed to consolidate his power base, and made impressive progress toward that end relative to the two previous Soviet successions, he still did not acquire the potential authority needed to preside over a fundamental shift in Soviet arms control objectives.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY ORIENTATION AND INTEREST IN A STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION AGREEMENT

This chapter seeks to achieve several objectives. First, it examines the proposition that the Soviets are more likely to be interested in signing and observing disarmament agreements during periods of détente. This may confirm the idea that relaxation of political tensions must be a prerequisite for successful arms negotiations. START is a great example of the principle that détente must precede substantive arms control outcomes. It demonstrates the near total dependence of progress in East-West arms control on the international political climate.

It is usually agreed by arms control theorists that failure to achieve progress in this vital area generally reflects the degree of tension between East and West at any given time.¹

The original intellectual forefathers of contemporary arms control theory understood that there was an integral relationship between East-West tensions and the prospects for arms control. In his seminal book, The Control of the Arms Race, Hedley Bull reminded the reader:

We cannot expect that a system of arms control will be brought into operation, nor that, if it is, it will persist, unless certain political conditions are fulfilled.²

Bull then listed those conditions:

Unless the powers concerned want a system of arms control; unless there is a measure of political détente among them sufficient to allow of such a system; unless they are prepared to accept the military situation among them which the arms control system legitimizes and preserves, and can agree and remain agreed about what this situation will be, there can be little place for arms control.³

This chapter will therefore explicitly seek to determine whether these conditions existed during the time period under discussion (1981 to 1983).

A second objective of this chapter will be to summarize the Soviet view of détente. This will also include an examination of the contribution of arms control

¹ Otto Pick, "The Leadership of Reagan and Gorbachev: The Soviet Perspective," in Walter Goldstein, ed., Reagan's Leadership and the Atlantic Alliance: Views from Europe and America, (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1986): 69.

² Hedley Bull, The Control of the Arms Race, (New York: Praeger, 1961), p. 9.

³ Ibid., p. 10.

negotiations and/or agreements to détente in the Soviet view. This chapter will attempt to show that the START negotiations did not take place in an atmosphere of détente and that therefore the Soviets were not motivated to seek an arms agreement for the purpose of re-institutionalizing détente.

I. THE HISTORICAL CORRELATION BETWEEN PERIODS OF DETENTE AND SOVIET INTERESTS IN DISARMAMENT

In 1979 Brezhnev gave the following Soviet definition of détente:

What is détente, or a relaxation of tensions? What meaning do we invest in this term? Detente means, first and foremost, ending the 'cold war' and going over to normal, stable relations among states. It means a willingness to settle differences and disputes not by force, not by threats and saber-rattling, but by peaceful means, at a conference table. It means trust among nations and the willingness to take each other's legitimate interests into consideration.⁴

As this quote suggests, there are several elements of the Soviet view of détente. First, and above all, détente in the Soviet view means a renunciation of the use of force to achieve political ends. As Raymond Garthoff notes:

⁴ "From Speech upon Presenting the Gold Star Medal to the Hero City of Tula," in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente & Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), 1979, p. 150. This passage is also given in Raymond L. Garthoff, Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1985), p. 36.

In the Soviet conception, détente and peaceful coexistence would serve "to make the world safe for historical change," so to speak, by depriving the imperialist powers, above all the United States, of resort to military force to curb the revolutionary social-economic-political transformations that would ultimately lead to world socialism and communism.⁵

Garthoff contrasts this Soviet view of détente with that of the United States:

For us, détente is a very broad concept. Primarily it means a common inclination on the part of states and their leaders not toward military preparations and hostility toward other states but toward peaceful cooperation with them. It means normal communication between countries and peoples, conscientious observance of the norms of international law, respect for each country's sovereignty and noninterference in each other's internal affairs. Finally it means a constant desire to promote by practical deeds the curbing of the arms race which has become the scourge of the world, and an aspiration to strengthen security on the basis of gradual intensification of mutual trust on the basis of fair, reciprocal principles.⁶

The Western powers accepted a renunciation of the use of force because they were compelled to do so by the changed correlation of forces. When Western "ruling circles" recognize this changed correlation of forces and take actions in accordance with this "new reality" the Soviets call it "realism:"

⁵ Raymond L. Garthoff, Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1985), p. 49.

⁶ Boris Kotov, "International Review," Pravda, 3 Oct. 1982, p. 4, translated in Soviet Union Daily Report, FBIS, 6 Oct. 1982, p. CC1.

Now the leaders of the bourgeois world can no longer seriously count on resolving the historic conflict between capitalism and socialism by force of arms. The senselessness and extreme danger of further increasing tension under conditions when both sides have at their disposal weapons of colossal destructive power are becoming ever more obvious.⁷

The Soviet Union has made clear that this renunciation of force does not apply to the ideological conflict between communism and capitalism. Its meaning is restricted to a cessation of the continuation of this conflict by Western resort to armed forces. Upon assuming the position of General Secretary of the CPSU, Yuri Andropov stated: "The CPSU does not want the dispute [of] ideas to grow into a confrontation between states and peoples, and it does not want arms and readiness to use them to become a game of the potentials of the social systems."⁸

Second, détente means a relaxation of tensions. This requires some qualification. The source of tensions is Western hostility to the Soviet program for socialist construction. Therefore relaxation of tensions means cessation of Western hostility to Soviet ideological aggression and expansion.

⁷ From a 13 June 1975 speech by Brezhnev carried in Pravda, 14 June 1975, cited in Raymond L. Garthoff, Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1985), p. 42.

⁸ Pravda, 25 Nov. 1982, translated in Soviet Union Daily Report, FBIS, 26 Nov. 1982, p. AA1.

Third, détente, in the Soviet view, is a way to promote, through peaceful means, the worldwide construction of socialism. In 1970 Leonid I. Brezhnev was quoted as saying "détente, in fact, creates favorable conditions for the struggle between the two systems and for altering the correlation of forces in favor of socialism."⁹

We make no secret of the fact that we see détente as the way to create more favorable conditions for peaceful socialist and communist construction. Détente does not and cannot mean a freezing of the objective processes of historical development. It is not a safeguard for decaying regimes. It does not indulge the right to suppress the peoples' just struggle for their national liberation. It does not remove the need for social transformations. This is a matter for the people of each individual country. It would also be erroneous to suppose that lessening the tension should be paid for by one-sided concessions by the socialist countries, that in conditions of détente the reactionary imperialist circles can achieve what they were unable to achieve during the 'coldwar' period.¹⁰

Fourth, the relaxation of tensions characteristic of détente does not apply to the "ideological struggle" being waged between communism and capitalism, which, after all, is the essence of international conflict in the Soviet view.

Note the correlation between the following quotes:

Détente and peaceful coexistence are not tantamount to a political and social status quo. Detente provides more favorable conditions for overcoming the crisis in a

⁹ Quoted in Albert L. Weeks and William C. Bodie, eds., *War and Peace: Soviet Russia Speaks*, (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1983), p. 6.

¹⁰ Pravda, 22 May 1976, cited in Raymond S. Sleeper, ed., A Lexicon of Marxist-Leninist Semantics, (Alexandria, VA: Western Goals, 1983), p. 83.

democratic way and for remaking society along democratic and socialist lines.¹¹

Détente in no way, however, means the freezing of the objective processes of historical development. In no way does it eliminate the existence of class antagonisms within capitalist states, between the people's interests and those of world imperialism, and between the two social systems, nor does it reduce the ideological confrontation.¹²

Fifth, the achievement of détente is the result of favorable changes in the world correlation of forces, and a certain "realism" on the part of capitalist leaders when they recognize and condone the inevitable advance of socialism based on that changing correlation of forces. While head of the KGB, Yuri Andropov is quoted as saying "Imperialism accepted détente, not because it wished to but because it was forced to. It was compelled to accept détente because the correlation of forces in the world arena changed in favor of socialism."¹³

In the past few years, conviction in the possibility, and moreover in the necessity, of peaceful coexistence was confirmed in the consciousness both of the broad popular masses and also in the ruling circles of the majority of countries. International détente has become

¹¹ B.N. Ponomarev, "The International Significance of the Berlin Conference," *Kommunist*, No. 11 (1976), cited in Raymond S. Sleeper, ed., A Lexicon of Marxist-Leninist Semantics, (Alexandria, VA: Western Goals, 1983), p. 83.

¹² Quoted in War and Peace: Soviet Russia Speaks, p. 7.

¹³ Ibid., p. 6.

possible because a new correlation of forces has been established in the world area.¹⁴

A Central Committee resolution passed in 1980 stressed: "Détente is the natural result of the correlation of forces in the world arena that has formed in recent decades. The military strategic balance between the world of socialism and the world of capitalism is an achievement of truly historic significance."¹⁵

According to this aspect of the Soviet view of détente, the Soviet achievement of strategic nuclear parity was the essential prerequisite for establishing normal relations with the West.¹⁶ Détente was "predicated on parity."¹⁷

Sixth, the Soviets believed that it was both possible and essential that political détente lead to "military détente." Military détente has three important aspects. First, it extends agreements in the diplomatic and political field to military issues in the form of arms control agreements:

¹⁴ Brezhnev in a speech on 13 June 1975, cited in Garthoff, p. 44.

¹⁵ "On the International Situation and Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union: Resolution of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, June 23, 1980," Kommunist, No. 10 (July 1980), cited in Garthoff, p. 38.

¹⁶(?)¹⁷

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 53.

Military détente is an intricate and multifaceted process of transition in military and political relations among states from confrontation to lower tensions, to a reduction in the danger of wars and their prevention, to a limitation of the role of armed force in international affairs. The basic content of this process must be a quantitative and qualitative restraint of the arms race, a gradual cut-back in armed forces, and eventual achievement of general and complete disarmament.¹⁸

Second, these agreements must be based on the principle of equality and equal security. Third, the regional focus of military détente is Europe, as demonstrated by this passage:

The main thing now is to complement political détente by military détente. One of the first priority objectives in this context is to find ways of reducing armed forces and armaments in Central Europe without prejudicing the security of any one, on the contrary, to the benefit of all. The most important demand of our time is to work for the reduction, and for ending the arms race, to proceed along the road leading to universal and complete disarmament; to lessen the military confrontation on European soil, and to work for overcoming the division of Europe into opposed military blocs.¹⁹

It seems reasonable to speculate that the Soviets felt that military détente had not been fully achieved during the political détente of the 1970s, and that they hoped to pursue its full establishment in the 1980s,

¹⁸ D. Proektor, "Military Détente: Primary Task," International Affairs (Moscow), No. 6 (June 1976), cited in Sleeper, p. 86.

¹⁹ L.I. Brezhnev, "On the Results of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe," in In the Name of Peace, Security, and Cooperation, (Moscow, 1975, pp. 8-9, cited in Sleeper, p. 85.

providing they were able to maintain a modicum of political détente, or prevent political détente from collapsing altogether. Prior to late 1983, the Soviets continued to hold out hope that détente could be rescued and re-established. Furthermore, it is clear that Soviet foreign policy priorities in the early 1980s were focused regionally on Europe, and that within that regional focus, they emphasized reaching arms accords of the kind characterized by military détente.

The Soviets have been relatively clear and straightforward about what détente means to them. They have been equally forthcoming concerning what détente does not mean.²⁰ It is not a preservation of the status quo. It is not a lessening of the Soviet commitment to the world communist movement or to wars of national liberation. (It is interesting to note that each time Soviet foreign policy placed emphasis on 'peaceful coexistence' there has followed the threat of secession in some East European country.) It is not a means for bringing about the ideological penetration of the socialist camp. It is not dependent on resolution of other issues. (Thus the Soviets reject the notion of 'linkage'.) It is not a Western concept adopted by the Soviets. Rather it is a concept originated and

²⁰ This paragraph draws on a discussion in Garthoff, pp. 47-49.

promoted by the Soviet Union, who has been its most faithful and persistent champion.

With regard to the Soviet view of the relationship between détente and arms control, the Soviets see important diplomatic and political advantages which accrue from participating in negotiations with the United States.²¹ But it is under the rubric of military détente that Soviet conceptions of the relationship between relaxation of tensions and arms control become clear.

For example, it is clear that arms control agreements follow and result from Western policies of "realism." That is to say, the Soviet Union rewards the West with arms control agreements after they have demonstrated a willingness to recognize a change in the correlation of forces favoring world socialism. Such arms control accords may include confidence-building measures, crisis management agreements, or arms limitation treaties.²²

III. THE SOVIET VIEW OF DETENTE IN THE 1980S

A review of Soviet statements regarding East-West relations indicates a high degree of satisfaction with

²¹ For a brief, but comprehensive treatment of Soviet diplomatic goals in U.S.-Soviet arms negotiations, see Keith B. Payne and Dan L. Stroude [Strode], "Arms Control: The Soviet Approach and Its Implications," Soviet Union/Union Sovietique, 10, pts. 2-3 (1983): 219-228.

²² Garthoff, p. 45.

détente in the 1970s. In 1976, Leonid Brezhnev gave this assessment:

Comrades, the turn for the better in our relations with the United States of America, the biggest power of the capitalist world, has, of course, been decisive in reducing the danger of another world war and in consolidating peace. This has beyond question contributed to the improvement of the international climate in general, and that of Europe in particular. Acting in complete accord with the guidelines set by the 24th Congress, we have devoted very great attention to the objective of improving relations with the United States.²³

According to Brezhnev, one of the principal benefits of détente was the achievement of the SALT I agreements.

The Soviets blamed the collapse of détente after January 1980 on U.S. President Jimmy Carter. The Soviets hoped to avoid passing on a legacy of deteriorated relations to Reagan, and therefore made it clear that they were not blaming him for the collapse of détente. Soviet objectives toward the new American administration were at the maximum to renew détente (on their own terms), or at a minimum to make sure that any Cold War that lingered beyond Carter's term in office was blamed on the Reagan administration's policies, and not on the Soviet Union.

²³ "From Report to the 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union," 24 Feb. 1976, in Leonid Brezhnev, Peace, Détente & Soviet-American Relations: A Collection of Public Statements, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), 1979, p. 107.

Reasons the Soviets gave for the assessment that détente was failing by late 1970s included the following:²⁴

- (1) the NATO decision to increase military spending over a period of several years;
- (2) the willingness of the United States and its allies to consider economic and military aid to China;
- (3) Brezhnev's failure to respond more vigorously to China's invasion of Vietnam in 1979, thus encouraging further Chinese probes in Asia;
- (4) the West's rejection of Brezhnev's arms reduction proposals in October 1979;
- (5) NATO's decision to Pershing IIs and cruise missiles while pursuing arms control initiatives (Dec. 1979);
- (6) the establishment of the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force (later renamed the U.S. Central Command);²⁵
- (7) the U.S. Senate's decision to table the SALT II Treaty, considered a key component of Brezhnev's policy of détente.²⁶

Brezhnev did not hesitate to establish his views on why détente collapsed, and who was responsible. Noting that "as the 1970s end and the 1980s begin the international

²⁴ This list is derived from Alfred L. Monks, The Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan, (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981), pp. 22-23. Andrei Gromyko, in a lengthy review of Soviet foreign policy up to 1981, cites all of the above given factors. See, "Leninist Foreign Policy in the Contemporary World," reprinted in Soviet Press: Selected Translations, 81, 4 (April 1981): 118-132, especially p. 122.

²⁵ Monks cites Krasnaya Zvezda, 6 June 1979, and 26 Dec. 1979.

²⁶ The Soviets had probably written off the SALT II Treaty before deciding to invade Afghanistan.

situation has worsened appreciably," Brezhnev identifies the reasons:

It has been clear for some time that the leading circles of the US and certain other NATO countries have embarked on a course hostile to the cause of détente, a course aimed at an upward spiral in the arms race that will increase the danger of war. This began back in 1978, at the May session of the NATO Council in Washington, where the automatic growth of the member-countries' military budgets through the end of the 20th century was approved. Recently, militaristic tendencies in US policy are also finding expression in the acceleration of new long-term arms programs, in the creation of new military bases far from the United States, including bases in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean area, and in the formation of the so-called "quick-reaction corps" -- an instrument of the policy of military interference.²⁷

Brezhnev added the following to his list of events leading to détente's collapse: (1) President Carter's withdrawal of the SALT II Treaty from consideration for Senate ratification; (2) the U.S. "imposing" on its NATO allies a decision to deploy INF weapons in Europe; and, (3) attempts by "opponents of peace and détente" to "capitalize on the events in Afghanistan."²⁸

For the Soviet Union a turning point came in January 1980.²⁹ It was at this point that the Soviet Union perceived American policy under President Carter as shifting

²⁷ "L.I. Brezhnev Answers Questions From a Pravda Correspondent," Pravda and Izvestia, 13 Jan. 1980, p. 1, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 32, No. 2 (13 Feb. 1980): 1.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Garthoff, p. 1009.

toward a return to cold war and a revival of interventionism. The Soviets then appear to have temporarily abandoned hope of restoring détente to its original status in U.S.-Soviet relations. At this point Moscow appears to have placed its hopes on the prospect that Reagan would, when confronted with the realities and responsibilities of the most powerful office in the Western world, demonstrate the realism that Nixon had, and would appreciate the value of agreements on trade, credits, and arms with the Soviet bloc.

The Soviet Union made clear that it was prepared to blame Carter for the tensions in U.S.-Soviet relations and not Reagan. This implied that the Soviets would give Reagan a chance to start fresh and would not hold the mistakes of the Carter administration against him. There was even evidence that they perceived Reagan as a target of criticism from the extreme 'right' in American politics, and therefore a candidate that might represent some measure of moderation.³⁰

Soviet criticisms of Carter make clear that they welcomed the end of his administration, accusing him of

³⁰ See for example Soviet commentary on Reagan inaugural address, M. Sturua, "Ceremony at the Capitol," Izvestia, 22 Jan. 1981, p. 5, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 33, 3 (18 Feb. 1981), pp. 3-4.

leaving a legacy "of chaos and confusion everywhere and a record peacetime military budget."³¹

The desperate flailing about of this petty politician, who has tried in all things to be like the other atomic maniac -- Harry Truman -- can only give one the impression that he has, from all indications, forgotten that Washington is not ancient Rome and that all attempts to remake the world in America's own image are simply chimerical.³²

A Christian Science Monitor article in June 1980, written from Moscow during the presidential campaign, noted: "The two most noticeable features of high-level reactions here are the condemnation, even contempt, for Mr. Carter, and the beginnings of a reluctant acceptance that Mr. Reagan might be the next president."³³ According to the analysis in this article, the Soviets accused Carter of deliberately sabotaging U.S.-Soviet relations and playing election politics with U.S. foreign policy.

The depth of anti-Carter sentiment is also seen in the following passage:

We know the scope that anti-Soviet military hysteria reached in the United States during the last months and weeks of the Democratic administration's tenure in the White House. J. Carter and those around him displayed an enviable consistency they so often lacked in

³¹ See N. Artemov, "Difficult Legacy," Sotsialisticheskaya Industria, 20 Jan. 1981, p. 3, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 33, 3 (18 Feb. 1981), p. 2.

³² Ibid.

³³ David K. Willis, "Moscow View: Carter No, Reagan Yes," Christian Science Monitor, 4 June 1980, pp. 1, 10.

conducting the country's foreign policy: They even used their very last days in power to pour oil on the fire and step up the pitch of the militaristic campaign.³⁴

The Soviet Union at this time (early 1980) was preoccupied with deflecting criticism of its invasion of Afghanistan. It was particularly concerned with responding to the criticism that it had ended détente by invading: "If there were no Afghanistan, certain circles in the US and NATO would surely have found another pretext to exacerbate the world situation."³⁵

Other Soviet officials reiterated Brezhnev's argumentation on this issue, including Yuri Andropov, then head of the KGB and a member of the Politburo, as well as Georgi Arbatov.³⁶

³⁴ Boris Orekhov, "International Survey: Changes in Washington," Pravda, 25 Jan. 1981, p. 4, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 33, 3 (18 Feb. 1981), p. 3.

³⁵ "L.I. Brezhnev Answers Questions From a Pravda Correspondent," Pravda and Izvestia, 13 Jan. 1980, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 32, No. 2 (13 Feb. 1980): 3.

³⁶ For Andropov's comments blaming the U.S. for the decline of détente and supporting the Soviet decision to invade Afghanistan, see "Election Meetings of Working People: The People's Unity Is a Great Force -- Voters Meet with Yu. V. Andropov," Pravda and Izvestia, 12 Feb. 1980, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 32, No. 6 (12 March 1980): 4; Arbatov's remarks can be found in "On the Threshold of a New Decade -- US Foreign Policy," Pravda, 3 March 1980, p. 6, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 32, No. 9 (2 April 1980): pp. 1-11..

Arbatov said "the greatest threat to world peace, at least in the past 10 years, is posed by the US policy swing toward cold war." Adding that "a second edition of the cold war would undoubtedly be more dangerous than the first," Arbatov detailed several consequences of renewed political tensions that reveal some insight into why the Soviets might want to revive détente in the 1980s. Quoting Arbatov:³⁷

- (1) "It would be more dangerous because a return to unrestricted hostility and confrontation would take place at a new level of the development of means of destruction, which would make an armed conflict more likely and its consequences still more disastrous.
- (2) "Moreover, many more participants in international relations would be dragged into the whirlpool of a second cold war. Given the conflicts among them, the risk would grow as the numbers increased, especially if some of these participants were inclined to play a very reckless and irresponsible game in the world arena -- the game China is playing.
- (3) "Another major danger posed by a return to the cold war is that it would make the proliferation of nuclear weapons virtually inevitable (the change in US policy has already increased the probability that Pakistan will become a nuclear power).
- (4) "The coming decades will see the serious exacerbation of global problems -- natural resources, energy, food, etc. Détente expands the possibilities for their solution. In cold war conditions, on the other hand, possibilities for resolving these problems in the interests of the peoples are drastically limited, and rivalry among states grows and sharpens. . . .
- (5) ". . . the security of America, and even its existence, are threatened not by the Soviet Union

³⁷ "On the Threshold of a New Decade -- US Foreign Policy," Pravda, 3 March 1980, p. 6, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 32, No. 9 (2 April 1980): pp. 3-4.

but by the continuing arms race, tension and unsettled conflicts -- everything that sooner or later may get out of control and lead to a thermonuclear catastrophe. The switch in American policy only aggravates this genuine threat to the US -- and to all other countries."

It is important to note that as late as the 26th CPSU Party Congress, which met February-March 1981, the Soviets were placing the blame for détente's failure on Carter, and not on Reagan.³⁸

While the Soviet Union originally blamed the decline of détente on the Carter administration, by the end of its first year in office, Moscow was faulting the Reagan administration for reviving the cold war.³⁹ U.S. "meddling" in Poland, for example, was at this point a source of irritation to the Soviets.⁴⁰ Other Soviet criticisms that emerged in the first few months of 1982 included: Reagan's decision to begin production of the neutron bomb; American determination to "upset by all possible means the existing strategic balance . . . whipping up tensions and destabilizing the situation in the world," specifically the Middle East, the Indian Ocean, South-East Asia, Africa, and

³⁸ Garthoff, p. 1014.

³⁹ See for example, Col. E. Asaturov, "USSR-USA: Dialogue, Not Confrontation," Soviet Military Review, No. 2 (Feb. 1982): 49-50.

⁴⁰ See for example Pravda, 28 Jan. 1982, p. 4, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 34, No. 4 (24 Feb. 1982): 10.

the Caribbean; and, expanding existing military blocs and alliances.⁴¹

Georgiy Arbatov wrote an article in which he accused the Reagan administration of being out of touch with reality, for "wandering in a dreamland," and being "completely divorced from the real situation."⁴² That reality in the Soviet view, was Soviet military parity with the United States -- fundamental and profound equality at the strategic nuclear level. An escalation of the "arms race" and an exacerbation of international tensions on the part of Washington failed to take into account the Soviet ability to respond, to take countermeasures, or to retaliate politically and militarily. This is what lurks beneath the surface of Arbatov's alarmed rhetoric.

While the Soviets may have held out some hope that Reagan would eschew his conservative origins and duplicate the achievements and policies of President Nixon, they were doomed for disappointment. Dimitri Simes has written:

There was hope that Reagan, despite his rhetoric, would turn out to be another Nixon. Soon, whoever believed in this notion in Moscow was disabused. By the end of 1982, Soviet observers began to claim that the USSR was confronted with an 'extremist administration' in

⁴¹ V. Shatrov, "International Affairs: Détente, Its Friends and Enemies," Soviet Military Review, No. 3 (March 1982): 46-47.

⁴² "American Policy in the Dreamland," Pravda, 16 July 1982, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 19 July 1982, pp. A1-A5.

Washington. No allowance was made for any possible good intentions on the part of Reagan.⁴³

Reagan's ultimate sin in the Soviet view was his apparent rejection of Soviet legitimacy, and his de facto American retraction of recognition of the Soviet Union as an equal superpower.⁴⁴ This recognition was a paramount objective of Soviet foreign policy. As Richard Pipes has clarified:

One of the highest priorities of the Soviet Union in dealing with the United States has been to gain recognition as an equal, that is, as one of two world "superpowers," and hence a country with a legitimate claim to have its say in the solution of all international problems, even those without immediate bearing on its national interests. Recognition of this status is essential because only by establishing itself in the eyes of the world as an alternate pole to that represented by the United States can the Soviet Union hope to set in motion the shift in the world balance of power that is the long-term aim of its foreign policy.⁴⁵

The Soviets considered such recognition a major result of détente. Not only was Reagan continuing the decline of détente begun by Carter, but he appeared actively intent on undoing this important Soviet achievement.

⁴³ Dimitri K. Simes, "Are the Soviets Interested in Arms Control?" Washington Quarterly, (Spring 1985): 150. Simes cites a Trofimenko Russian language piece in support of this assertion.

⁴⁴ Garthoff, pp. 1014-15.

⁴⁵ Richard Pipes, "Détente: Moscow's View," in Richard Pipes, ed., Soviet Strategy in Europe, (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976), p. 21. (3-44.)

In June 1982, the view emerged in the pages of Krasnaya Zvezda that Reagan was determined to lead a "crusade" against communism:

Washington's hegemonist ambitions were reflected in recent comments of American leaders and especially in the speech by President Reagan to the British Parliament in which he resorted to coarse attacks against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries and openly appealed for a "crusade" against communism.⁴⁶

The Soviets accused Reagan of basing U.S. foreign policy on the premise of "direct confrontation" with the USSR.⁴⁷ Note the following Chernenko statement from October 1982:

The Soviet Union is opposed to a further growth of tensions in Soviet-American relations. We stand for their normalization and improvement and are prepared to engage in businesslike and detailed negotiations which must of necessity take account of the interests of both sides. If, however, Washington proves unable to rise above primitive anti-Communism, if it persists in its policy of threats and diktat, well, then we are sufficiently strong and we can wait. Neither sanctions nor bellicose posturing frighten us.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ A. Leont'yev, "Washington's 'Crusade': Betting on World Hegemony," Krasnaya Zvezda, 27 June 1982, p. 3, translated in USSR Report: Military Affairs, JPRS, 11 Aug. 1982, p. 84.

⁴⁷ See for example the themes presented in Soviet News and Propaganda Analysis, Special Operations Division, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D.C., Vol. 3, No. 1 (Jan. 1983).

⁴⁸ Chernenko is quoted in John F. Burns, "Moscow Says It Is Still Committed to Improving Ties With the U.S.," New York Times, 30 Oct. 1982. Chernenko's remarks are also covered in Anthony Barbieri, Jr., "Soviet Still Wants Détente, Aide Says," Baltimore Sun, 30 Oct. 1982, and Ned Temko, "Why Soviets Toughen Anti-US Line Cautiously," Christian Science Monitor, 1 Nov. 1982. Other Western media

III. SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY AND DETENTE, 1981-1984

Brezhnev's principal foreign policy legacy was a Soviet Union that had benefited to a great extent from the détente of the 1970s, and which was committed to maintaining those benefits.

As the previous section has tried to stress, the Soviets were prepared to absolve the Reagan administration of any blame for the poor state of U.S.-Soviet relations at the time Reagan entered office. They hoped he would adopt a "realistic" policy (by recognizing the necessity of peacefully coexisting with the Soviet state and its world program for socialist construction) as had President Nixon in the early 1970s. Just days before he died, Brezhnev renewed his call for improvement of East-West relations on the basis of détente.⁴⁹

Events soon dispelled any Soviet hopes for resuming détente as if nothing had happened between 1975 (when détente started becoming widely questioned in the United States) and December 1979 (when the Soviets invaded

sources interpreted Chernenko's remarks differently. See, "Soviets Say U.S. 'Has Failed Test of Détente,'" Washington Times, 1 Nov. 1982. This sources noted that Western analysts interpreted Chernenko's remarks to mean the Soviet Union was prepared to accept the poor state of U.S.-Soviet relations up until 1984 when new presidential elections would hopefully replace the Reagan administration.

⁴⁹ John F. Burns, "Brezhnev Renews Call for Détente but Warns West," New York Times, 8 Nov. 1982.

Afghanistan and destroyed any lingering illusions about the value of détente). Reagan was not about to restore détente on Soviet terms. However, it was left to Andropov to finally abandon all Soviet efforts to entice the U.S. back to a 1970s-type U.S.-Soviet relationship. Even as late as April 1982, while Brezhnev was still in power, the Soviet Union was suggesting a summit meeting with President Reagan to take place on neutral territory in the fall of 1982 as a gesture for resumption of detente.⁵⁰

However, the Soviet Union was loathe to abandon détente altogether. When it did, it was determined to make clear that the United States was to be blamed for détente's failure.

In many ways, Andropov's succession led to a reaffirmation of Brezhnev's policies.⁵¹ In other ways, Andropov sharpened the U.S.-Soviet conflict. It seems clear in retrospect that Andropov did not anticipate any near-term improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations, and was therefore prepared to a) take certain risks, and b) postpone any

⁵⁰ Pravda, 18 April 1982, p. 1, translated in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 34, 16 (19 May 1982): 6.

⁵¹ See, for example, the editorial in Pravda, 1 Dec. 1982, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 1 Dec. 1982, p. CC1. This editorial stresses the continuity among the 24th, 25th, and 26th party congresses regarding foreign policy objectives, namely the "Peace Program." Those objectives were characteristically portrayed as firmly committed to détente and peaceful coexistence.

effort to revive détente until the U.S. showed a greater willingness to accommodate Soviet interests.

One of the ways in which Andropov reaffirmed Brezhnev's general foreign policy line was by stressing a continuing Soviet commitment to détente. At least, this appears to have been the message Andropov gave Vice President Bush when they met at Brezhnev's funeral.⁵² In his speech to the plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Andropov made clear that the Soviet Union was committed to détente, but there was a limit to this commitment:

All are equally interested in preserving peace and détente, therefore statements in which the readiness to normalize relations is linked with the demand that the Soviet Union pay for this with some kind of preliminary concessions in the most varied fields sound lacking in seriousness to say the least. We will not go along with this. . . . We are for equality, for considerations of the interests of both sides and for honest agreement, we are ready for this.⁵³

Upon assuming the post of General Secretary, Andropov quickly set out to assure the world public that the Soviet Union remained committed to détente. In his address of 22 November 1982, Andropov declared that "[e]nsuring a lasting peace and defending the right of peoples to independence and social progress are the invariable goals of our foreign

⁵² Dusko Doder, "Andropov Tells Bush Soviets Are Ready to Build U.S. Relations," Washington Post, 16 November 1982.

⁵³ Pravda, 25 Nov. 1982, p. 6, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 26 Nov. 1982, p. AA1.

policy."⁵⁴ A week later, Georgi Korniyenko, first deputy foreign minister of the Soviet Union, declared in an American periodical:

The new Soviet leadership attaches great importance to the development of Soviet-American relations, to which the Soviet Union contributed so greatly in the past. That was not a time-serving policy. It was an inalienable part of the strategic line in the foreign policy that the newly elected general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, said our country is determined to continue.⁵⁵

A noted U.S. sovietologist has asserted that Andropov was an ardent supporter of the policy of détente since at least 1975, and that "Andropov has been much more urgent in his support for détente than any of the other major contenders [to succeed Brezhnev]."⁵⁶ While adherence to the Soviet leadership's "Peace Program," announced at the 24th CPSU Party Congress in 1971, was obviously a prerequisite for political advancement under Brezhnev, Andropov's alleged enthusiasm for détente poses an interesting question: Why would the head of the Soviet KGB take such an interest in East-West détente? Several reasons come to mind.

⁵⁴ "Address by Soviet General Secretary Andropov [Extract], November 22, 1982," in Documents on Disarmament 1983, p. 833. Evidence that both Andropov and Chernenko carried on this declaratory Soviet commitment to détente can be found in Garthoff, pp. 15, 37.

⁵⁵ Georgi Korniyenko, "A Plea for 'Good Relations,'" Newsweek, 29 Nov. 1982, p. 38.

⁵⁶ Jerry F. Hough, "Soviet Succession: Issues and Personalities," Problems of Communism, 31, 5 (Sept.-Oct. 1982): 33.

First, détente in the Soviet view is intended to constrain only the West. It leaves the Soviet Union free to pursue its political and ideological agenda relative to global socialist construction. In the Soviet view, it is also designed to retard the growth of Western (specifically U.S.) military power. In this regard, Charles M. Kupperman has suggested that détente requires the U.S. to accept certain conditions, including recognizing "the state of U.S.-Soviet military parity while the Soviet Union continues to seek strategic superiority," and "recognition of the Soviet political sphere of influence."⁵⁷

Second, Andropov may have vigorously backed détente because it made the job of the KGB easier. It opened the flow of trade. It sanctioned wider diplomatic contacts, thus providing expanded opportunities for infiltrating KGB agents under diplomatic guises, a Soviet tradition dating back to the origins of the Bolshevik regime.⁵⁸

Third, it eased the Soviet defense burden by foreclosing, through arms control arrangements, American strategic nuclear responses to the Soviet threat in the

⁵⁷ Charles M. Kupperman, "The Soviet World View," Policy Review, 7 (Winter 1979): 65.

⁵⁸ See Kerry M. Kartchner, "'A Mask to Cover Shady Deeds': Soviet Diplomatic Deception, 1917-1939," in Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, eds., Soviet Strategic Deception, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987), pp. 147-169.

field of ABM systems.⁵⁹ In an environment of deliberate restraint on the part of the West, the Soviets could hope to forestall any significant U.S. reaction to their broad post-SALT strategic modernization program. As Kupperman notes: "The Soviets do not want to provoke a strong U.S. counter-response that could delay or deny the Soviet drive for global dominance."⁶⁰

Perhaps even more importantly, it facilitated Soviet security objectives in Central Europe. For example, NATO initiatives to modernize its tactical and theater nuclear forces did not materialize until 1983. Throughout the 1970s European members of NATO were inhibited from acquiescing in American efforts to increase defense expenditures for fear of offending the Soviets and damaging détente. When NATO finally did decide to modernize its nuclear forces and increase its defense expenditures, the Soviets decried these actions as undermining détente, proving that the absence of these initiatives was, in the Soviet view, a primary benefit of détente. For these reasons, and others, Andropov must have been keenly aware of the many advantages détente provided the Soviet Union throughout the 1970s. This could also explain why Andropov appeared anxious to revive détente

⁵⁹ See Brian D. Dailey, "Deception, Perceptions Management, and Self-Deception in Arms Control: An Examination of the ABM Treaty," in Dailey and Parker, Soviet Strategic Deception, pp. 225-259.

⁶⁰ Kupperman, p. 64.

(on Soviet terms) once he assumed the General Secretary position.

Gromyko vouched for Andropov's commitment to détente in the following manner:

[Soviet foreign policy is] reflected in our statesmen's speeches on concrete issues of policy, on concrete proposals -- above all in the speeches of Yuri Valdimirovich Andropov, general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee. . . . This is a peaceful policy, a policy of friendship among peoples. It is a policy of noninterference in other states' internal affairs. It is a policy aimed at relaxing tension in the world and eliminating the tension from the international situation. It is aimed at reversing the mindless arms race, and above all, arriving at ways to reduce and limit armaments, which is a good formula, and subsequently, ways to eliminate armaments.⁶¹

The fact that a consistent propaganda line was put forth by the Soviets before and after Andropov's succession indicates a broad consensus on presenting such an image.

In keeping with his apparent tradition of espousing détente on Soviet terms, Andropov was among those who echoed Brezhnev's criticisms of U.S. policy in the early days of 1980, following the onset of a chill in U.S.-Soviet relations in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Andropov cited "political nostalgia"⁶² as the

⁶¹ "Statement by Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko: Soviet Disarmament Policy in General and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Force Negotiations [Extracts], April 2, 1983," Documents on Disarmament 1983, p. 253.

⁶² In an attempt to compare Reagan's foreign policy in the 1980s with U.S. cold war policy in the late 1940s and 1950s, some Soviet authors even took to quoting from official American documents of the cold war era. For

motivation for "certain circles" in the United States who were seeking a return to the Cold War:

The reason for the complication of the international situation is well known. It is Washington's irresponsible and dangerous policy. From all indications, the tune is being set there now by the most reactionary forces, allied with the military-industrial complex -- forces that would like to bring back the old days, when the imperialist powers imposed whatever systems they liked on other countries and peoples.

The sources of this "political nostalgia" lie in the inability of certain circles in the US to soberly interpret the social and political changes taking place in the world and to understand the objective essence of these changes. . . . The real reasons for the current switch in Washington's course should be sought neither in the events of Afghanistan nor in the actions of the Soviet Union. They lie in the US ruling circles' fear of the wave of social changes and in their desire to return the world to the "blessed days" of imperialist domination. . . . The real danger is the fact that Washington, seeking to capitalize on the events in Afghanistan, is in fact moving toward the undermining of détente and the undermining of agreements already reached.⁶³

This statement demonstrates Andropov's early inclination to place the blame for détente's failure squarely on the United States. Elements of this blame were

example, see references to NSC-7 ("The Position of the United States with Respect to Soviet-Directed World Communism," 30 March 1948) in N.D. Turkatenko, "A Conspiracy Against the Entire World," SShA: Ekonomika, Politika, Ideologiya, No. 4 (April 1983): 3-6, translated in USSR Report, JPRS, 6 July 1983, pp. 1-5. Turkatenko argues that the U.S. was reviving a global anti-communist movement under the Reagan administration.

⁶³ "Election Meetings of Working People: The People's Unity Is a Great Force -- Voters Meet with Yu. V. Andropov," Pravda and Izvestia, 12 Feb. 1980, p. 2, in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 32, No. 6 (12 March 1980)): 4.

articulated from time to time throughout the course of the START negotiations by Soviet commentators. There were four common themes regarding U.S. policy as anti-détente. According to these views the U.S. was guilty of: (1) an ideological and economic offensive against the USSR; (2) attempting to rearrange the world into spheres of influence (including undoing the Yalta accord); (3) desiring to achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union; and, (4) pursuing a propaganda offensive intended to portray Soviet Union as evil and untrustworthy.⁶⁴ One Soviet author summarized these four points in the following manner:

The arms limitation and reduction process should also be viewed against the backdrop of current U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union, which may be characterized by four major elements. First, there is an all-out effort to pressure the Soviet Union, to try to interfere in its internal affairs, even to question the legitimacy of its system, to initiate all sorts of sanctions. Second, there is an attempt to rearrange the world arbitrarily into various spheres of interest; to proclaim certain regions to be of vital interest to the United States with no regard for the vital interest of those regions' people. Third is a clear desire to achieve military superiority over the Soviet Union, although this is sometimes called a margin of safety. Fourth is, of course, a heavy offensive propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union, portraying it as the embodiment of evil in the world, and as a country not to be trusted to comply with its obligations under agreements -- hence, all the innuendos and accusations, such as the alleged Soviet use of chemical weapons, and so on.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Dusko Doder, "Soviets Say U.S. Tries to Destabilize Europe," Washington Post, 17 Jan. 1982.

⁶⁵ Yevgeniy N. Kochetkov, "The Positions of the USSR on Nuclear Weapons and Arms Control," Annals (of the American

Based on talks in the Soviet Union between senior Soviet officials and U.S. diplomats, a Senate Foreign Relations Committee report concluded that: "Virtually all the Soviets we met with complained bitterly that the belligerent, crusading tone of the administration was raising the danger of superpower confrontation and an escalating arms race."⁶⁶

Perhaps the most disturbing finding of the trip is the extent to which the current arms control impasse has led to a deterioration in the bilateral relationship. The Soviets describe the overall state of bilateral relations using terms such as "a critical situation," "pushing us to the brink," "a highly dangerous path," and "extreme pessimism."⁶⁷

Soviets interviewed for this report indicated strongly that they "want it understood that they consider all the moves to be on the American side of the board." The report continues:

The Soviets argue that they have taken every possible opportunity to normalize and regularize relations with the United States but have received no indication that real improvements are possible. . . . The Soviets suggest that their actions in Poland, Afghanistan and Cuba pose no threat to the interests of the United States. Their security requirements are simply different from those of the United States, they

Association of Political and Social Sciences), 469 (Sept. 1983)): 139.

⁶⁶ See media coverage of the report in Roy Gutman, "U.S.-Soviet Arms Agreements Not Likely, Senate Report Says," Long Island Newsday, 5 June 1983, p. 5.

⁶⁷ U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, The United States and the Soviet Union: Prospects for the Relationship, A Staff Report, (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, June 1983), p. vi.

maintain. Soviet forces are not all directed at the United States; therefore, the military balance should be understood on a worldwide basis, not simply a United States-Soviet comparison. . . . Soviet officials say they have the impression that the United States now considers détente to have been a mistake or an "accident of history," while to them it seems that there is no reasonable alternative.⁶⁸

Soviet views of U.S. foreign policy reflected a great deal of dissatisfaction with American efforts to correct what the U.S. perceived as problems with détente as practiced in the 1970s. This was a major aspect of Soviet calculations regarding the political conditions for a strategic arms reduction agreement. There were dimensions to Soviet foreign policy other than a hostile and critical stance toward the United States. According to Lawrence Caldwell and G. William Benz, there were four central elements of Andropov's foreign policy, including: a limited and conditional support for on-going negotiations with the United States, the launching of a "peace offensive" aimed at exploiting the European peace movement and the American nuclear freeze sentiment, promoting and isolating regional détente in Europe from the fallout of U.S.-Soviet relations in the aftermath of the Soviet invasion of

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 2.

Afghanistan, and the pursuit of several other regional initiatives.⁶⁹

The first three of these four were obviously designed to salvage whatever could be retrieved of détente on Soviet terms. Soviet objectives were "to support continued discussion in major arms control forums (INF and START) while displaying public skepticism and charging the U.S. with using the talks to cover its own military buildup."⁷⁰ Soviet support for continuing discussions in INF, START, and MBFR forums should be understood in this context. It should also be noted that this support only went so far -- it stopped short of endorsing an agreement on terms that would have represented a reasonable compromise with the U.S. positions on reducing strategic weapons.

Unveiled at a conference of Warsaw Pact nations in the capital of Czechoslovakia, Andropov's foreign policy debut was to launch a "peace offensive," calling for NATO to sign a treaty renouncing the first use of nuclear and conventional weapons.⁷¹ The objective was to press a public

⁶⁹ Lawrence T. Caldwell and G. William Benz, "Soviet-American Diplomacy at the End of an Era," Current History, May 1983, p. 207.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ See John Kohan, "Playing to a Western Audience," Time, 17 Jan. 1983; and Steven Strasser and Robert B. Cullen, "Andropov's Double Game," Newsweek, 17 Jan. 1983, p. 7. A stepped up "peace offensive" was predicted when Andropov assumed power. See Sallie Wise, "Soviet Foreign

campaign intended to bring pressure to bear against NATO's INF modernization plans while threatening to place the United States in an "analogous position."⁷² Some observers in the West noted the proximity of the March 6 parliamentary elections in West Germany, implying that Andropov's principal intended audience was Western Europe.⁷³

Salvaging regional détente in Europe through a policy of "differentiated détente" was another major Soviet foreign policy objective under Andropov. This involved the adoption of policies

. . . whereby the Soviet Union would accept the deterioration in Soviet-American relations but would attempt to offset the damage to Soviet interests caused by the decline in superpower relations by improving its relations with America's allies, thereby weakening the United States' global position."⁷⁴

Again, the Eurocentric orientation of Soviet foreign policy is demonstrated in this element of regional détente:

The central thrust of Soviet diplomacy has been in Europe, in particular with regard to the INF negotiations and NATO's plans to deploy Pershing 2's and GLCMs.⁷⁵

Policy After Brezhnev: Unfinished Business," Radio Liberty Research, RL 458/82 (16 Nov. 1982), esp. p. 2.

⁷² Caldwell and Benz, p. 207.

⁷³ Robert E. Hunter, "Andropov -- A Fine Sense of Timing," Los Angeles Times, 17 Jan. 1983.

⁷⁴ Caldwell and Benz, p. 207.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 234.

Another major foreign policy objective was to launch several "geopolitical initiatives:"

Exploring a series of geopolitical initiatives -- with China, Japan, Afghanistan and Europe -- which, while not surrendering any fundamental positions, would reinforce the peace movement in the West, would give impetus to differentiated détente with those allies of the United States who could be impressed with Moscow's 'reasonableness' in the global competition, and would include an implicit threat to the Americans that the Soviet Union retained options for advancing its own interests in the global competition.⁷⁶

There was also an important Chinese connection.⁷⁷ One of Andropov's important foreign policy initiatives appears to have been an opening of sorts to China. This began at Brezhnev's funeral where Andropov singled out Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua, shaking his hand several times.⁷⁸ Brezhnev's funeral was also the occasion of a meeting between Mr. Hua and Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet foreign minister.⁷⁹ Earlier that month, prior to Brezhnev's

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 207.

⁷⁷ For a general treatment of the issue of Sino-Soviet relations and their arms control impact, see Helmut Sonnenfeldt, "The Chinese Factor in Soviet Disarmament Policy," in Morton H. Halperin, ed., Sino-Soviet Relations and Arms Control, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1967), pp. 117-143; and for a more contemporary analysis, see Dan L. Strode, "Arms Control and Sino-Soviet Relations," Orbis, 28, 1 (Spring 1984): 163-188.

⁷⁸ Doder, "Andropov Tells Bush Soviets Are Ready to Build U.S. Relations."

⁷⁹ Dusko Doder, "Chinese, Soviet Officials Hold Highest-Level Talks Since 1969," Washington Post, 17 Nov. 1982.

passing, the Chinese ambassador had attended the annual military parade down Red Square to commemorate the anniversary of the October Revolution.⁸⁰

In his address shortly after becoming General Secretary, Andropov stated:

The CPSU and the Soviet state sincerely want the development and improvement of relations with all socialist countries. Mutual goodwill, respect for one another's legitimate interests and common concern for the interests of socialism and peace should prompt correct solutions even where, for various reasons, the proper trust and mutual understanding are still lacking.

This also refers to our great neighbor, the Chinese People's Republic. . . . We are paying great attention to every positive response from the Chinese side.⁸¹

The Soviet approach to China during this period, however, mirrored that of the Soviet approach to the West. While increasing trade, diplomatic, and educational contacts, the Soviet Union increased its military forces with the potential of striking China, as well as those along the actual Soviet-Chinese border.⁸² This reflected the 'carrot-and-stick' approach characteristic of Andropov's foreign policy toward the West.

⁸⁰ Burns, "Brezhnev Renews Call for Détente But Warns West."

⁸¹ "Address by Soviet General Secretary Andropov," , pp. 833-34.

⁸² These two dimensions of Sino-Soviet relations are treated in Harry Gelman, "The Present Stage in Sino-Soviet Relations," Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Occasional Paper, No. 181, March 1984.

Ironically, by breaking off the talks on START and INF, the Soviet Union guaranteed a lingering cold war environment.⁸³

IV. THE DETERIORATION OF U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS IN THE FALL OF 1983

In the Summer of 1983 many in the West began to see fruits of Andropov's "peace offensive." Several Soviet gestures were by then adding up to make real inroads on Western opinion. Observers pointed to the following evidence that U.S.-Soviet relations might improve that summer included: a tentative agreement under discussion to open new U.S. and Soviet consulates in Kiev and New York; movement in the Warsaw Pact position at the MBFR negotiations; the Soviets' release of 15 Pentacostalists, five of whom had been living at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow for five years; rumors that Andropov had signaled Soviet flexibility on arms control to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl; and Soviet easing of opposition to Western proposals for human rights provisions to be included in a 35 nation

⁸³ Ted Agres, "Trashing SALT on the Road to a Tense Cold War Revival," Washington Times, 9 Dec. 1983. Mr. Agres makes the point that the Soviet walk-out of START and INF, as well as violations of SALT I and II, means that "the Soviets have concluded they no longer stand to make political or military gains through maintaining a facade of abiding by SALT II and other accords," or by seeking further arms limitation or reduction agreements with the United States.

review of the 1975 Helsinki Accords on Security and Cooperation in Europe.⁸⁴

In late September 1983, following nearly a month of tense superpower exchanges over the shooting down of flight KAL-007, Andropov released an extremely critical message on U.S.-Soviet relations intended primarily to counter the adverse reaction of Western public opinion and to disclaim responsibility for the tragedy.⁸⁵

Accusing the United States of an "unprecedented build-up" of military potential, of expanding its global military presence, of involving other NATO countries increasingly in its dangerous plans, of reviving Japanese militarism, and of being morally responsible for the Korean airliner tragedy,⁸⁶ Andropov's statement displayed a bitter, disillusioned tone. The United States had refused to renew détente on terms acceptable to the Soviet Union. In the West, journalists called it the first public

⁸⁴ Daniel Southerland, "Signs of Thaw Appear in US-Soviet Relations," Christian Science Monitor, 11 July 1983.

⁸⁵ The text of Andropov's statement can be found in "Statement by Soviet President Andropov: Relations With the United States, September 28, 1983," Documents on Disarmament 1983, pp. 811-816. The military dimensions and implications of Andropov's remarks are examined in Krasnaya Zvezda, 4 Oct. 1983, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 11 Oct. 1983, pp. AA12-AA14.

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 811-812.

dismissal of hopes for improved U.S.-Soviet relations.⁸⁷

Andropov's statement read in part:

Even if someone had any illusions as to the possibility of a turn for the better in the policy of the present American Administration, the latest developments have finally dispelled them. For the sake of its imperial ambitions, it goes so far that one begins to doubt whether Washington has any brakes at all preventing it from crossing the mark before which any sober-minded person must stop.⁸⁸

Andropov's statement reveals a genuine Soviet concern that recent events had seriously increased the danger of war. This theme is repeatedly implied in his message. He warns against a "trial of strength," saying:

No one will ever be able to reverse the course of history. The USSR and the other socialist countries will live and develop according to their laws -- the laws of the most advanced social system.

The Soviet State has successfully overcome many trials, including severe ones, during the six and a half decades of its existence. Those who encroached on the integrity of our State, its independence and our system found themselves on the scrap-heap of history. It is high time that everybody to whom this applies understood that we shall be able to ensure the security of our country and the security of our friends and allies under any circumstances.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Ned Temko, "Andropov's Cold Blast Puts Geneva on Ice," Christian Science Monitor, 30 Sept. 1983.

⁸⁸ "Statement by Soviet President Andropov," p. 812.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 813.

Accusing the United States of being possessed of an "outrageous militarist psychosis" and "blinded by anti-communism," Andropov notes:

We do not see that the American side is truly willing to consider and solve the problem of limiting and reducing strategic armaments. In the American capital they are now busy launching the production of ever new systems of these armaments as well. They are to be followed shortly by types of weapons which may radically alter the notions of strategic stability and the very possibility of effective limitation and reduction of nuclear arms.⁹⁰

Andropov's statement may further be interpreted as an attempt to deflect attention from the Korean Airliner tragedy to other outstanding issues in U.S.-Soviet relations.⁹¹

The hypocrisy in Andropov's statement lies in the fact that the Reagan administration took great pains to insulate U.S.-Soviet arms negotiations from the tensions following the Soviet massacre of KAL flight 007. As noted in Chapter Three, the Reagan administration's response was regarded by many in the West as remarkably restrained, and as irrefutable evidence that the administration was sincere about improving U.S.-Soviet relations and making progress in strategic arms reduction talks. Following Andropov's

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 815. Note Andropov's veiled reference to SDI.

⁹¹ Michael Dobbs, "Andropov Trying to Broaden the Focus of Superpower Dispute," Washington Post, 2 Oct. 1983.

outburst, hopes faded for an INF agreement in the near future.⁹²

Raymond Garthoff believes there were several important sources of Soviet pessimism in the Fall of 1983:

From the Soviet perspective, in the first half of the 1980s the United States had turned to a broad policy of more active use of counterrevolutionary insurgent forces in its attempt to roll back history. Thus, beginning in 1981 the Reagan administration stepped up U.S. assistance to insurgents in Afghanistan, stimulated a new insurgency in Nicaragua, and indirectly supported other reactionary powers in aiding the insurrections in Kampuchea, Angola, Mozambique, and Ethiopia. In short, virtually all the gains by revolutionary forces in the latter half of the 1970s were being subjected to a vigorous counterattack in the first half of the 1980s.⁹³

Also according to Garthoff, a major source of Soviet pessimism at this time was American use of force in Grenada:

The American invasion of Grenada . . . was seen as evidence of a continuing U.S. readiness, even eagerness, to use military power to roll back progressive revolutionary change where that could be done expeditiously.⁹⁴

Garthoff's implication seems to be that Reagan's decision to use force in Grenada was one factor leading to the Soviet decision refrain from compromising in START and INF, and to dismiss the impact of walking out of these negotiations on overall East-West relations.

⁹² William Beecher, "Tense Ties for US, Soviet," Boston Globe, 30 Sept. 1983.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 1063.

⁹⁴ Garthoff, p. 1063.

There was a general deterioration in several of the indices the Soviets use to calculate the correlation of forces during the early 1980s.⁹⁵ These factors included a failure of the Soviet economy to meet expected growth rates, an alleged disillusionment with the ideological appeal of Marxism-Leninism in the Third World, resurgent American patriotism and military assertiveness, growing domestic support for Reagan's leadership in the United States, and Reagan's apparent determination to lead a renewed global drive for democracy.⁹⁶

Soviet propaganda organs accused the United States of exploiting the KAL-007 tragedy for the purposes of whipping up anti-Soviet hysteria:

As is known, the Reagan administration has used the incident involving the South Korean aircraft, which it itself arranged, to seriously worsen the international situation. Having created an atmosphere of hysteria with the aid of this provocation, the White House has endeavored to resolve a number of political tasks. It has pushed through Congress the huge new U.S. military budget, which until then was creaking along. It has exerted considerable pressure on the allies of the United States with the aim of ensuring the right atmosphere for the deployment in weeks to come of the new U.S. missiles in Western Europe.

It is clear that by exacerbating international tension the White House was also pursuing election aims, since, as you already know, the campaign to prepare for

⁹⁵ See Chapter 4 for a fuller discussion of the Soviet view of the correlation of forces in the 1980s.

⁹⁶ Several of these factors are treated in Edward N. Luttwak, The Grand Strategy of the Soviet Union, (New York: St. Martin's, 1983), pp. 28-39.

the next presidential election in the U.S. has already begun. And since Reagan has no achievements to his political credit, be they in domestic or foreign policy, everything indicates that the calculation was to improve the Republican Party's chances by creating a wave of chauvinism and military hysteria. Everything points to the fact that that this is the way Washington planned it, in any case.⁹⁷

In October 1983, Izvestiya published an article which decried the "messianic idea of world rule . . . inherent in the U.S. social system," and repeated the Soviet line regarding the deteriorated state of U.S.-Soviet relations characteristic of Soviet propaganda following the KAL-007 incident, accusing the U.S. of returning to "brinkmanship" in its foreign policy actions:

If you chart the U.S. Administration's practical actions, what clearly emerges is a structure of a long-term policy which is not only bringing back the cold war, but also promoting the idea of reviving the messianic hope of world domination by developing militarism and by the possible launching of nuclear war.⁹⁸

None of this was new. What distinguishes this article from other Soviet commentaries of this period is the extreme bitterness with which President Reagan is personally attacked. Reagan's political and personal philosophy is attributed by this article to nearly every evil Communists see in the capitalist system:

⁹⁷ Valentin Zorin, Moscow Domestic Television Service, 8 Oct. 1983, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 12 Oct. 1983, p. A5.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. A3.

R. Reagan was pushed to the top by a group of the "powerful of this world," who found in him a cynical demagogue, an obedient apostle of "big business," and a chauvinist. . . . It is said that in his youth Reagan hesitated for a while over the choice of political views that would most benefit him. But his hesitations ceased in the dark days of McCarthyism. He immediately sized up the reliability, stability, and long-term prospects of right-wing reactionary views in the United States. Without delay he headed a crusade against the "communist spirit" in Hollywood. It was then, too, that he was noticed by the bosses of "big business" and the special services as a man of promise.⁹⁹

Another incident the Soviets took as evidence that the U.S. was determined to raise the level of tension in the Fall of 1983 was the U.S. denial to allow Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko permission to land at Kennedy International Airport to attend a General Assembly session of the United Nations.¹⁰⁰

In Soviet commentaries of this period the "cult of strength" theme was played up: "the cult of strength now dominates not to a lesser but possibly to an even greater extent."¹⁰¹ Soviet commentators stressed that there was a fundamental difference between these American efforts to

⁹⁹ A. Yakovlev, "With the Bit Between Their Teeth," Izvestiya, 7 Oct. 1983, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 12 Oct. 1983, p. A2.

¹⁰⁰ Valentin Zorin, Moscow Broadcast in English to North America, 15 Oct. 1983, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 17 Oct. 1983, pp. A6-A7.

¹⁰¹ Vitality Kobysh, "Observer's Opinion: Crossroads," Literaturnaya Gazeta, 19 Oct. 1983, p. 9, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 19 Oct. 1983, p. A5.

negotiate from strength and undermine détente, and previous U.S. actions to promote East-West tensions:

First, in contrast to the forties and fifties the present heightening of war hysteria is taking place in an epoch of a cardinally different correlation of forces in the world, at an immeasurably more dangerous level of military confrontation than before. Second, the United States is now conducting a line of truly global confrontation with socialism. Third, the extreme danger of "Reaganism" lies in the fact that Washington tries to talk with the rest of the world in such a way as if nothing has changed since the Second World War.¹⁰²

A fourth item might be added to this list. Another factor distinguishing U.S. efforts to undermine East-West relations at this time was the fact that Washington had undertaken international obligations to secure and promote détente -- obligations the U.S. was guilty of violating:

What is standing in the way of normalizing relations between the two countries? Above all, it is Washington's failure to comply with the agreements already reached, and among them the agreement on preventing a nuclear war signed at summit level.¹⁰³

V. CONCLUSIONS

Much of the foregoing material has concentrated on Soviet rhetoric that is obviously dogmatic in character, but it illustrates the degree to which the Soviet Union is

¹⁰² TASS, report of an article in Mirovaya Ekonomika I Mezhdunarodnaya Otnosheniya, 13 Oct. 1983, translated in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 14 Oct. 1983, p. A4.

¹⁰³ Commentary by Vladlen Kuznetsov, Moscow Broadcast in English to North America, in Soviet Union: Daily Report, FBIS, 14 Oct. 1983, p. A6.

prepared to put pressure on the United States to acquiesce in Soviet conceptions of stable East-West relations. The Soviet propaganda cited above is also an indication of Soviet assessments of the world situation. Clearly the authors of this propaganda were responsive in their writings to the attitudes and policies of officials in the upper hierarchy of the Soviet Communist Party leadership.

This chapter has pursued a fairly simple line of reasoning, based on a few key assumptions. First, it has assumed that the Soviets are more likely to be interested in disarmament agreements during periods of détente. It is widely accepted that progress in arms control is dependent on improvements in East-West political tensions, rather than vice-versa. A second assumption has been implicitly substantiated by the evidence examined in this chapter. It is that the Soviet approach to arms control negotiations and agreements is designed to contribute to a political end (détente) rather than a strictly military end (first-strike stability). An examination of Soviet views and attitudes toward détente during the 1981 to 1983 time frame indicates that, from the Soviet perspective, the START negotiations did not take place in an atmosphere of détente.

The Soviet Union enjoyed a détente that was based largely on their own terms throughout the 1970s. Under Andropov Moscow was determined to revive this détente. The Soviets gave many indications that they were interested in

improving U.S.-Soviet relations and resuscitating détente during the time frame under discussion in this report. However, Soviet interests in this respect must be qualified.

First, the Soviets wanted to revive détente on their own terms. A general idea of these terms can be deduced from Soviet criticisms of U.S. actions. Soviet terms for reviving détente included U.S. renunciation of the use of force for any and all foreign policy objectives. The U.S. was also expected to renounce interfering in the internal affairs of other states, which in essence meant abandoning support for democracy in Third World countries where it was either under siege or trying to reestablish itself.

Soviet terms for renewing détente also included American abandonment of its strategic nuclear modernization program and conventional military build-up.

Second, Soviet wishes for a relaxation of tensions and restoration of U.S.-Soviet détente consisted mainly of numerous declarations of principle and espousal of several abstract disarmament proposals, including a nuclear freeze, a no-first-use pledge, and token signs of flexibility in START and INF. Soviet statements calling for renewed détente were not accompanied by any substantive actions, despite the frequent call for a show of positive American deeds, not words.

The Soviets were unwilling to show substantive interest in signing a START agreement for the sake of

improving U.S.-Soviet relations. As far as Soviet foreign policy objectives were concerned, it was sufficient to merely participate in on-going negotiations with the United States on strategic arms. This demonstrated a superficial Soviet sincerity about improving relations without necessitating substantial risks in terms of foreign or domestic political support.

Again here, it is important to stress that the breakdown in arms control negotiations was a symptom, and not a cause of U.S.-Soviet political tension. The United States deliberately avoided allowing the shooting down of KAL-007 to impinge on START, INF, or MBFR arms control negotiations. Certainly the Kremlin recognized this clear signal of U.S. sincerity. Even the Los Angeles Times recognized the culpability of the Soviet Union in pursuing a cold war climate during the first years of the 1980s:

Whether in response to domestic political considerations or not, the President has made important concessions in arms-control negotiations dealing both with strategic nuclear weapons (START) and with the prospective deployment of U.S.-made missiles in Western Europe to offset the Soviet SS-20s that are already in place.

The Administration signed a new grain agreement with Moscow. It removed restrictions on the exporting of pipeline-laying equipment to the Soviet Union. And, except for his condemnation of the Soviet destruction of a Korean Air Lines jet, the President's rhetoric has been notably moderated.

Even in the aftermath of the airline incident, Reagan made fundamental new concessions in the START

negotiations. He expressed again his conditional interest in a summit meeting with Soviet leader Yuri V. Andropov. And he resisted right-wing pressures for new economic sanctions against Moscow.¹⁰⁴

Two factors worked against the re-emergence of détente in the 1981 to 1983 time period.¹⁰⁵ First was American determination to restore its ideological, political, and military power, which had all been seriously eroded during the détente of the 1970s. This included both an increase in military expenditures along with a new propensity to apply American force in certain situations, as well as initiatives to counter Soviet-backed terrorism and insurgency in key regions around the world. Second was "the attempt by the Soviet Union to maintain the advantages it had achieved and to demand respect for its superpower status from the United States."¹⁰⁶ In essence, this was the effort to restore détente on Soviet terms, something the Reagan administration was clearly not prepared to do.

Short of a complete renewal of détente on its own terms, such as it enjoyed in the 1970s, the Soviet Union was interested only in appearing interested in détente so as to focus world public opinion on Washington as the source of

¹⁰⁴ Editorial, Los Angeles Times, 12 Oct. 1983.

¹⁰⁵ Richard W. Stevenson, The Rise and Fall of Détente: Relaxations of Tension in US-Soviet Relations, 1953-1984, (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1985), pp. 203-209.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 206.

world tensions. The objective of appearing interested in détente, while avoiding establishing a détente relationship of real substance, was served admirably by a concomitant policy of being interested only in negotiating arms agreements while avoiding taking steps leading to substantive compromises that might have produced an agreement with the United States.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

I. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND OBJECTIVES

Volume I of this report reviewed the evolution of Western views of Soviet interests in arms control. This review highlighted several points of interest. First, prior to the late 1950s, Western analysts generally assumed that the Soviet Union was disinterested in substantive arms control, and that Soviet arms control policy aimed solely at seizing the moral high ground for propaganda purposes. Second, during the period 1958-1962, Western scholars (primarily American scientists and academics) elaborated theories of mutual deterrence and arms control that assumed a cooperative negotiating partner. These theories involved specific assumptions about Soviet interest in partial

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disarmament, or limited steps toward general and complete disarmament. Among them were the following:

- the Soviets had embraced an appreciation for the necessity of peaceful coexistence, and shared with the West a paramount desire to avoid nuclear war;
- Soviet interest in substantive arms control would be facilitated by overall East-West nuclear parity;
- the Soviets were interested in arms control for much the same reasons as the West (i.e. fear of nuclear war, desire to promote domestic economic growth by relief from heavy defense expenditures, etc.)
- Soviet desires to enter agreements on arms limitation would reflect genuine national interests, and those national interests would ensure continued Soviet compliance with the agreements.

It was further argued in Volume I that these assumptions were operative in U.S. SALT policy prior to the advent of the Reagan administration, and that the Soviet record of noncompliance with SALT is an indictment of the traditional view of Soviet interests in arms control. Several deficiencies in this view were identified, among them a profound mirror-imaging and a failure to account for possible Soviet disinterest, or asymmetries of interest, in seeking settlements on questions of war and peace with the West. Of particular importance was the frequent failure to distinguish between several discernible levels of Soviet interest in arms control.

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Volume I also contained a proposed framework for analyzing Soviet interests in arms control that attempts to remedy these problems. It suggested that Soviet arms control motives may be broken down into four levels; (1) Soviet interests in proposing arms control initiatives, (2) Soviet interests in negotiating arms control initiatives, (3) Soviet interests in agreeing to arms control initiatives, and (4) Soviet interests in complying with arms control initiatives once signed.

Soviet interests in proposing arms control initiatives are best understood in a historical context. There was a radical change in the Bolshevik stance toward disarmament proposals in 1921. To repeat a quote from Chapter Two:

Beginning in mid-1921 the Soviet government adopted the posture it has assumed until the present day, claiming to be the leading and probably the only sincere supporter (excepting the Soviet bloc) of disarmament.¹

Prior to that time, the official Bolshevik view could be summarized with the following statement by Lenin:

Let the hypocritical or sentimental bourgeoisie dream of disarmament. So long as there are oppressed and exploited people in the world, we must strive, not for

¹ Walter C. Clemens, Jr., "Lenin on Disarmament," Slavic Review, 23, 3 (Sept. 1964), p. 508.

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disarmament, but for the universal arming of the people.²

As mentioned in Volume I, there were several reasons for Lenin's "volte face." They revolved around a decision to alter the ostensible attitude of the new Soviet state toward the outside world by promoting an early version of peaceful coexistence. The Bolshevik leaders determined that their chances for survival would be improved by taking a more conciliatory posture in world politics. This tactical change of policy was necessitated by perceptions of a hostile foreign threat and the severity of domestic economic deprivation. The three most important elements in this decision to be noted here are: (1) the Bolsheviks believed that the relative balance of forces (later termed "correlation of forces") was extremely adverse to their interests; (2) there were important internal, or domestic reasons for seeking a conciliation with the outside world; and, (3) it probably would not have been possible without the leadership authority commanded by Lenin.

There were important propaganda benefits the Bolshevik leaders hoped to gain from their espousal of

² V.I. Lenin, "The Army and the Revolution," (1905), Selected Works, (New York: International Publishers, 1937), Vol. 3, p. 339; cited in A Lexicon of Marxist-Leninist Semantics, Raymond S. Sleeper, ed., (Alexandria, VA: Western Goals, 1983), p. 93.

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disarmament. Again repeating a quote from Walter Clemens given in Volume I:

By attending international conferences and championing disarmament, the Soviet regime hoped to enhance its prestige, divide its enemies, and win friends among the opponents of war and (for example, in Turkey) of European imperialism.³

Richard Pipes was cited as pointing out that Soviet détente policy and peace proposals permit the U.S.S.R. to disallow criticisms and to "avoid questions touching on the nature of the peace that is to result from détente."⁴

Soviet interests in negotiating arms control initiatives also involve strong elements of propaganda, but there are other reasons for the Soviets to engage an adversary in negotiations. There are important benefits to the Soviets deriving from a 'process' of negotiating. For one, such a process has an asymmetrical inhibiting effect on the West. Among these are the following as noted by Colin Gray:⁵

-- Encourage the popular Western fallacy that there is a 'happy ending' to East-West rivalry;

³ Clemens, p. 520.

⁴ Richard Pipes, "Détente: Moscow's View," in Richard Pipes, ed., Soviet Strategy in Europe, (New York: Crane, Russak, 1976), p. 28-29.

⁵ Colin S. Gray, "Arms Control in Soviet Policy," Air Force Magazine, March 1980, p. 69.

-- Persuade Western politicians and publics that restraint and reasonableness today will be rewarded tomorrow'

-- Exploit the Western emotional investment in the process itself, so as to influence Western behavior in other policy areas; and,

-- Perpetuate the Western belief that arms control can be a panacea for security concerns.

Zdzislaw M. Ruraz noted the value of negotiations for intelligence gathering.⁶ Such intelligence may include not only information about the adversary's actual capabilities and programs, but also his intentions and willpower -- both dimensions are critical to Soviet assessments of the correlation of forces. Note that negotiations, with their high visibility quotient in the Western media, also serve as ideal conduits for disseminating disinformation and other forms of deception.

Soviet interest in agreeing to be bound by a treaty, whether an arms control agreement or some other diplomatic accord, retains many of the motives mentioned above, including seizing the propaganda high ground, but also includes a narrower range of objectives. Peter Vigor has suggested that there are only two reasons the Soviets would

⁶ See Zdzislaw M. Ruraz, "Analysis of Soviet Risk Assessment in Arms Control Treaty Violations," in Joseph D. Douglass, Jr., Why the Soviets Violate Arms Control Treaties, Vol. II (McLean, VA: Falcon Associates, October 1986), pp. 143-144.

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ever agree to a treaty obligation: to stall for time; or to register some condition in their favor that they want to preserve, or against them and which they want to prevent from deteriorating further.

This last objective (to prevent a bad situation from worsening) is interesting because it essentially means stalling for time, suggesting that, ultimately, the sole purpose for agreements (in the Soviet view) is gaining time for the eventual triumph of socialism over capitalism. In fact, this is precisely what is suggested by Nathan Leites' analysis of the Bolshevik "operational code:"

In certain circumstances any kind of agreement, with any kind of enemy, may be just as required as all-out violence against an enemy is in others. The aim of both methods is the same: to decrease the chances of the Party being annihilated, to increase the chances of its annihilating its enemies. . . . When the Party and a certain enemy have failed in their attempts to advance against each other, the conditions for an effective agreement between them have come into existence.⁷

Leites has also noted that "there is no essential difference between coming to an ostensibly amicable arrangement with an outside group or using violence against it; they are both tactics in an over-all strategy of attack."⁸

⁷ Nathan Leites, A Study of Bolshevism, (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1953), p. 60. See also idem., The Operational Code of the Politburo, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951).

⁸ The Operational Code of the Politburo, p. 88.

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Soviet interests in complying with arms control agreements pose a fascinating subject of study, one that, unfortunately, exceeds the bounds of this report, but which must nevertheless be made clear here. The West originally assumed that a Soviet signature on an agreement meant that the Soviets had assessed that agreement as being in the national interest, and equated that as also meaning compliance with the agreement would be in the national interest. The record of Soviet noncompliance with regard to the SALT I and II agreements suggests otherwise. What incentives do the Soviets have for complying with an agreement? The following might be suggested:

-- seizing the propaganda high ground (can be accomplished merely by sustaining the impression of complying)

-- compliance requirements are compatible with defense programs and national interests (they are so loose as to allow for these), there is no compelling security need to violate agreements

-- maintaining incentives for the other side to continue complying (again this could conceivably be accomplished merely by the impression of compliance on the part of the Soviet Union)

-- compliance with one arm control agreement is seen as a necessary precondition to some other desired arms control outcome (for example, providing the Soviets genuinely sought a SALT II agreement following the signing of SALT I -- as I believe they did -- they would have had a certain incentive for conveying the impression of complying with SALT I)

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-- noncompliance would result in sanctions that involved higher costs for the Soviet military (i.e. U.S. responses required increased Soviet defense outlays) Of course, the record of U.S.-Soviet arms control shows very little likelihood of U.S. responses of this nature.

II. CONCLUSIONS

A. Soviet Disinterest in a Strategic Arms Reduction Agreement

The principal conclusion of this report is that, during the period 1981 to 1983, the Soviet Union was more interested in negotiating strategic arms reductions than in reaching agreement on strategic arms reductions.

Negotiations alone (with little more than apparent movement toward some form of accommodation) served Soviet foreign and military objectives. The Soviet Union had no pressing domestic, foreign, or military need for an agreement to reduce strategic nuclear weapons along the lines proposed by the United States (i.e. emphasis on reducing land-based ICBMs to equal limits for both sides).

There are five areas of evidence on which this conclusion is based. For one, it is clear that the Soviet Union saw propaganda interests in coming to the negotiating table with the United States. There was a multitude of Soviet statements professing interest in strategic arms reductions. This demonstrates at least a high degree of superficial interest for whatever reasons. Second, Soviet

Table 6.1

SUMMARY OF SOVIET ARMS CONTROL OBJECTIVES

1. IN PROPOSING ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES

- seize the propaganda high ground
- deflect criticism of the Soviet Union as a threat to peace
- distract attention from the nature of the peace the Soviets would impose
- promote the appearance of ideological moderation

2. IN NEGOTIATING ARMS CONTROL PROPOSALS

- seize the propaganda high ground
- seek superiority over a potential opponent by lulling his sense of alarm, etc. (this is a variation on the "buying time" objective)
- gather intelligence or other information on a potential adversaries capabilities and intentions
- establish a channel for disseminating disinformation and deception

3. IN AGREEING TO ARMS CONTROL TREATIES

- seize the propaganda high ground
- codify some existing situation, either to retain some Soviet advantage, to buy time while undermining some opponent's advantage, or forestall the opponent gaining an advantage not already held
- buy time

4. IN COMPLYING WITH ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS

- seize the propaganda high ground
- induce reciprocal compliance
- alleviate the possibility of sanctions or other responses to Soviet noncompliance

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policy subordinated START to agreement on issues in another negotiating forum (INF). That is, the Soviet Union imposed preconditions for reducing strategic nuclear weapons that had little to do with the substance of the START negotiations.

Third, a review of the publicly available START negotiating record indicates little or no movement in the fundamental Soviet position, despite major concessions to Soviet objections on the part of the U.S. delegation. Had the Soviets placed a higher priority on reaching agreement to reduce intercontinental nuclear weapons there would have been greater flexibility in the Soviet START position.

Fourth, an evaluation of the leadership and foreign policy context of Soviet START policy, as well as the relative U.S. and Soviet bargaining positions in START, suggests that there were significant internal obstacles to Soviet movement toward the U.S. negotiating position, even had the Soviet Union been more interested in a START agreement.

Fifth, the Soviet Union was adequately successful (at least until late 1983) in achieving its foreign and military policy objectives through negotiations, and did not need a START agreement, certainly not a START agreement such as proposed by the United States.

B. Sources of Soviet Interests in Proposing and Negotiating Strategic Arms Reductions

Soviet interests in negotiating START were derived from the following sources: 1) NATO INF modernization plans; 2) the potential maturation of Reagan's strategic modernization program; 3) the desire to salvage the SALT framework with its asymmetrical impact on U.S. nuclear weapons modernization efforts; and, 4) the propaganda benefits of promoting an image of the Soviet Union as peace-loving and exploiting the Western peace movement on issues of no-first-use and a nuclear freeze. None of these had any direct connection with reducing strategic nuclear weapon arsenals for the sake of stability or international security. All of them could be achieved to a substantial degree without formal agreement.

C. Sources of Soviet Disinterest in a Strategic Arms Reduction Agreement

There were three principal sources of Soviet disinterest in agreeing to strategic arms reductions as suggested by President Reagan: 1) the lack of U.S. bargaining leverage; 2) Soviet leadership instability due to a series of successions; and, 3) Soviet unwillingness to revive détente through arms control and Soviet assessments that the U.S. was similarly disinclined.

This conclusion suggests an interesting point. It will always be a simple matter to achieve nuclear arms

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control agreements with the Soviets -- providing one is willing to accept without reservation the terms dictated by Soviet negotiators. Achieving agreements that promote U.S. interests are an entirely different matter. There may in fact be little the U.S. can do to secure Soviet agreement to reasonable arms control accords.

This report has concluded that the failure to reach a strategic arms reduction agreement in the 1981 to 1983 time frame had little to do with U.S. policy. This is an explicit refutation of the criticism by many Americans to the effect that the Reagan administration's START policy was insincere, non-negotiable, or otherwise responsible for the breakdown in talks in November and December 1983. Internal Soviet conditions may have had a greater impact on preventing Soviet compromises in the START negotiations. This suggests that during certain eras the U.S. may not be able to constructively engage the Soviet Union in arms control talks. In such times there may be little the U.S. can do to promote Soviet interests in arms control agreements. Of course, this assumes the United States wants an agreement. Note the following adamant advice from French General Pierre Gallois:

You Americans must get over the idea that you can ever have a real arms-control negotiation with the Soviets. They are impressed by power, only power, not talk. You have always lost when you have tried to influence them through negotiation. You give up something real, they give up nothing that they want, and your president announces a success. But do you really

get a quid pro quo? Never: rien, rien, jamais rien. The Soviets act in a completely different style: Did they ask your permission to deploy the SS-20? Was it even offered as a subject of negotiation? Or their invasion of Afghanistan? Of course not. They do what they want and negotiate about what you're going to do. No, you must give up hope of achieving anything with them by negotiation. You must simply resolve to take the steps required for your security. That, and that alone, they will respect.⁹

D. Preconditions for Soviet Interest in
a Strategic Arms Reduction Agreement

This report has proposed that Soviet interests in arms control in general, and strategic arms reductions in particular, are conditioned by three basic sets of factors: Soviet perceptions of the correlation of forces (including perceptions of relative bargaining leverage); the status of Soviet leadership and its desires to achieve Soviet objectives through arms control; and, the general orientation of Soviet foreign policy.

Those eras when the Soviet Union appeared most interested in arms control outcomes (early 1920s, early 1930s, and late 1960s) were characterized by Soviet perceptions of an adverse correlation of forces, strong leadership (and post-succession crisis stability), and a foreign policy oriented toward peaceful coexistence. None

⁹ Quoted in John Train, "The Soviet Wedge in Geneva," Wall Street Journal, 28 Sept. 1983.

of these 'preconditions' existed in the 1981 to 1983 period when START was first being negotiated.¹⁰

The thrust of this report has been to explore the conditions or factors necessary for Soviet interest in a strategic arms reduction agreement. It cannot be over-emphasized, however, that these factors do not, by themselves, indicate whether the United States would benefit from arms reduction negotiations or agreements with the Soviet Union. They merely indicate whether the conditions for such a treaty outcome exist. The advisability of an arms control treaty must ultimately be based on whether its specific terms promote or impede the achievement of primary national security interests. As Thomas C. Schelling and Morton Halperin asserted in 1961: "the evaluation of any arms proposal will depend on its specific content."¹¹

¹⁰ It is possible that those conditions may have come into existence in the latter half of the 1980s. This suggests that a strategic arms reduction agreement is much more likely at the present time than during the 1981 to 1983 period.

¹¹ See Strategy and Arms Control, (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1961), p. 43. Twelve criteria relating to the evaluation of SALT, but with general applicability to any prospective strategic arms agreement, are developed in William R. Van Cleave, "Implications of Success or Failure of SALT," in William R. Kintner and Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr., eds., SALT: Implications for Arms Control in the 1970s, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1973), pp. 313-336, esp. pp. 328-329.

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